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OF

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PRELECTIONS

ON

BUTLER'S ANALOGY

PALEY'S EVIDENCES OF CHRISTIANITY, AND
HILL'S LECTURES IN DIVINITY.

WITH TWO INTRODUCTORY LECTURES, AND
FOUR ADDRESSES DELIVERED IN THE NEW COLLEGE, EDINBURGH.

BY THE LATE

THOMAS CHALMERS, D.D. LL.D.

EDINBURGH: THOMAS CONSTABLE AND CO.
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INTRODUCTORY LECTURES.

LECTURE I.

ON THE USE OF TEXT-BOOKS IN THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION.

THE PRAYER.

HEAVENLY FATHER, by Thy preserving hand Thou hast ushered us into the labours of another week. Do Thou give support and strength for the execution of them. In every good work may we be enabled to consult our own souls ; and may the wisdom from above preside over all our deliberations and all our doings. May they who are here present hold it no light work to prepare for the ministry of the gospel of Jesus Christ : and grant that the fatigues of study may be lightened to them all, both by the complacency of an approving conscience, and by the charm which Thou hast been pleased to annex to the exercise of all our faculties.

Theology is by far the most voluminous of all the sciences. There is none that comes nearly up to it in the amount, or, in what may be termed, the dimensions of its authorship. But it were not saying much for the glory of sacred literature merely to say that it had attained the bulk of a colossus. It is, in fact, a colossus of most precious and solid materials, brought together by the multiplied efforts of a most prodigious industry, and elaborated into form by the skill of many thousand intellects, some of which equal, both in power and in achievement, the most gigantic of those spirits that ever signalized themselves in any of the walks of philosophic investigation.

When one not extensively conversant in the erudition of the science, sets himself down to the work of composition on any of its topics, he is apt to delude himself with the imagination that by his creative power he is giving birth to novelties ; and yet, in the vast majority of instances, there will be

found a much fuller exhibition of his very thoughts and arguments by authors who have gone before him. The truth is, that already every department of this multifarious theme is marvellously filled up, and scarcely a question can be started which has not been met in one way or other by powerful and original thinkers of former days. It is a mistake, that when the human mind was set at liberty about three centuries ago, they were the sciences which experienced the chief effect of the sudden emancipation. The consequent force and freedom and exuberance of intellect thus set at large, flowed over, in fact, on every walk of speculation, and theology had its full share in this enlargement—the vast and varied lore which belongs to it having been most laboriously traversed, and many of its most arduous difficulties having, on the whole, been successfully grappled with. In the *Edinburgh Review*, in a paper on the *Dramatic Writings of Ford*,* we have an admirable sketch from the pen of Mr. Jeffrey of the intellectual activity and power which broke forth through England in the seventeenth century; but the very characteristics of vigour and independence and prodigious industry which he ascribes there to the philosophers of England, were also abundantly realized by the divines of England, from whose hands an ample and well-stored treasury of things new and old has been bequeathed to succeeding generations.

Now, the question is, How shall we make best and fullest conveyance of the lessons of this science to the students of a theological school? One method is for the professor to describe the whole mighty series of topics in written compositions of his own, and by the delivery of these, to acquit himself of his task. In other words, ere he shall proceed to teach the science, he must have produced a treatise upon it, or rather, a succession of treatises on the different parts or subjects of this vast and varied scholarship. Upon this system his part is to read, and yours is to listen to his reading of these treatises; and whatever during the process may have been apprehended by your understanding, or may have gained your conviction, or may have adhered to your memory, that is the instruction which he has given, and that is the instruction which you have received. The essential peculiarity of this method lies neither in the substance of the doctrine nor in the order of it, both of which may be alike unexceptionable under different methods; but it lies in its coming to you through the medium of his own written language. Every sentence and every paragraph must be framed by himself; and though on many a given topic of his extended lectureship some gifted reasoner or expounder of former days may have left behind him the standard and the classic model, which distances

* *Edinburgh Review*, No. xviii. p. 275.

all imitation, and makes superiority hopeless if not impossible, still the professor is expected to try his own hand upon it, and so to thrust as it were the dim transparency of his own shaded and imperfect lucubrations between the mind of his disciples and all that purer and more penetrating light which might else have directly beamed upon them from the wisdom and the genius of past ages.

Now, to warrant such a universal engrossment as this by the professor, to make it indispensable that every theme and every argument of his course, however well they may have already been propounded by one or other of the great masters in theology, shall not be brought into contact with your understanding till they have been recast in the mould of his conceptions, and transmuted into his phraseology—to expect, that throughout the whole length and breadth of the science, he must be ever speaking to you in *propria persona*, instead of guiding you to those oracles whence the best possible deliverance hath already been sent forth, or at least as good, if not better, than any which the great majority of living instructors can substitute in its place—why, he would need to be a man who, by the strength of his single arm, could do the accumulated work of many ages, and do each portion of it, too, in higher style than all and every of the separate authors who have gone before him. Such an extraordinary personage as this, who could condense within his own little day the labour of centuries, and, by the superior force of his demonstrations, displace from the office of your immediate instructors all his predecessors in theology—such a one may aspire to the formation of a universal system, and make it the sole instrument of your tuition in his class-room ; but you will suffer, and by the excess, too, of his supererogation, unless he can reason more sagaciously than Butler, and push more deeply into the mysteries of our nature than Edwards, and deliver the precepts of Bible criticism with more clearness and cogency than Campbell, and make more lucid and masterly exposition of the evidences both of natural and revealed religion than Paley, and systematize the doctrines of our faith with more orderly arrangement, or pour forth upon them a greater fulness of illustration and argument than Calvin, or Turretin, or Pearson, or Burnet, or Hill ; and lastly, on the momentous theme of your practical and professional duties, more solemnly impress the conscience, and speak with a more awakening energy than Richard Baxter. To supersede these men, or rather to supersede their writings by his writings, he should be able to unite the characteristics of all, and to excel them all, and so to radiate forth upon you with a brightness and a power surpassing the concentrated force of all the luminaries who have yet made their appearance in the world.

Be assured that there is a better way of ordering this matter, whether for the object of seasoning your minds with the sound and right spirit, or supplying them with the solid informations of theology. Let us take, for an example, Butler's Analogy of Natural and Revealed Religion. I might transfer the whole substance and argument of this masterly composition into lectures of my own, and so discharge the main contents of the volume upon you, after they have been made to undergo this elaborate process of distillation. But I speak both the convictions of my reason and the findings of my professional experience, when I tell you of a more excellent way—a way by which, I am quite sure, that I could make a far more effectual lodgement in your understanding of all the principles and philosophy of Butler. I would conduct you immediately to himself ; I would bid you draw at once, and with your own hands, from the fountainhead ; I would have you read, in successive passages, the work ; and the course should be practically carried forward on the strength of these readings, and of my examinations. The book while it lasts will be the subject of a daily and, I trust you will find it, of a delightful and animating converse betwixt us. It will be your part to make the intelligent and attentive perusal ; it will be my part to try your intelligence, and that by means of a questionnaire process ; to help on your conceptions of the author, if I find them deficient either in fulness or accuracy ; and so to cause that the whole wisdom of Butler shall be heard in the midst of us, whether in sounds of extemporaneous utterance from me or from yourselves. He for a time, in fact, will be in possession of this chair. The light that shines from it will, mainly speaking, be by a primary radiance from him, though tinged, and occasionally modified, by a secondary reflection from its living occupier. Still the chief business of the expounder will be to bring out to view the life and lustre of his great original ; and I repeat, that the joint impression made upon you by the direct radiance which cometh from the one, when mixed with the reflection that cometh from the other, will be tenfold more complete and durable than can possibly be effected either by the solitary readings of the closet, or by the unaccompanied lectures of the class-room.

But you are not to conceive that we purpose a slavish adherence to Butler, or indeed to the doctrines of any text-book. By means of text-books, we are persuaded that we shall not merely save ourselves a prodigious waste of most unnecessary and misplaced labour, but that we shall be enabled to guide you over a far more extended course of theological study, and through a richer variety of theological lessons. Yet for this purpose it is not indispensable that all the text-books, over which we propose to carry you as over so many successive groundworks of the course, shall in

themselves be absolutely faultless. They may suggest the topics, but in no instance shall they control the judgment that we may entertain of them. We may have at one time to dissipate the obscurities of our author ; we may at another have to rectify his errors. We may have to add ; we may have to illustrate ; above all, we may have to confront him with other authors, and direct you to such readings at home as might tally with the current lessons of the class-room, and so extend and complete your scholarship in the departments through which you are passing. I should be greatly disappointed, if after having thus traversed any standard work in theology, you could only state it, as the whole amount of your acquisition, that you had mastered the book. I want you to master the subject of the book. The book I regard but as a nucleus for all that instruction which may be naturally or pertinently grafted thereupon. You therefore greatly mistake it, if you think that this is a device for superseding the energy of your living instructor. He is, or he ought to be, alert and awake throughout the entire process. He may, in fact, be as much on the foreground, as your teacher, in this work of conversational exposition as in the work of a formal and elaborate lectureship : and though he does move in the stream of another's argument, yet it is argument mixed and amalgamated with his own running commentary. He might throw the full force of his mind into it ; and it is the light of a presiding intellect from him that should direct and vivify the whole.

Be assured, whether we present you with the whole analysis of such a process or not, that its benefits are incalculable. By a series of the best selected authors, you secure for the class-room the soundest and the wisest lessons in theology ; and at the same time these lessons urged home upon you with all that power of excitement which somehow or other lies in the living voice of an expounder. His address on the various topics of the course you will not find to be less impressive that it consists of a spoken conference with yourselves, instead of a written soliloquy which he reads in your hearing. And remember that you bear a part in the conference ; that you will have to prepare for it ; that a stimulus is thereby obtained not merely to your attention here, but to your constant work and study out of doors. And in proportion to your attention in the closet, will you be able to signalize yourselves by your appearances in the class-room ; and when daily put upon your own resources, both for thought and expression here, you will be led to the daily habit of pondering at home the subjects of tuition. On the other, which is still the more common system, there is no reciprocation of mind between the teacher and the taught. There may be action, but there is no reaction ; and the first is in danger of languishing

under the want of that alimant and animation which the second so abundantly affords it. I esteem very highly this colloquial method of instruction, when the teacher comes among you with no other preparation than the preparation of thoughts, and is left to flounder as he may for those words by which he might clearly and expressively convey them—when he has to cast about for phraseology ; and if he find by examination that he has not yet obtained the sympathy of your intelligence, he restates and re-illustrates, and desists not from the repetition of his attempts till he has carried the understanding of at least the ablest of his auditory : when, with thorough premeditation of the truths, but without any premeditation of the terms in which they are to be couched and conveyed to you, he fearlessly trusts himself to the language of the moment ; and so the meaning that is within has to struggle for utterance till it finds an effectual discharge, and has made full deposition of itself in the minds of many of his hearers. It may appear odd, but I think I am quite right when I say, that granting the speaker to have the whole sense and substance of the thing in his head, the impression of the sense is often enhanced by the very difficulties which are felt in the articulate conveyance of it, by the very strength of those impediments through which it has to force its way. The natural signs are often found, in these circumstances, to repair the defects of the arbitrary. The eye, and the emphasis, and the whole action of the speaker, are pressed into the service of this labouring communication, and these, as bespeaking a mental activity on his part, in general beget a sympathetic activity in the minds of those who are around him. It is in these various ways that the extemporaneous converse of a professor has often awakened a busier play of intellect than the delivery of any more formal and elaborate preparations. It may not be the way to set off himself, but it is the way to give powerful and perpetual impulse to his students, and to speed onward the great object of their practical education.

I would not speak of this matter so confidently, did I not feel that I was speaking experimentally. According to my views of the science, there is none so destitute of unexceptionable text-books as moral philosophy, and I therefore taught it by the delivery of a series of written lectures. The same observation does not apply to political economy, where Dr. Smith, in his book on the Wealth of Nations, presents at least all the topics of the science, however short he may yet have come of having fully ascertained or conclusively established all the doctrines of it. I accordingly adopted it as the groundwork, not for a series of lectures, but for a series of conversations, reserving to myself, of course, the liberty of rectifying, or refuting, or further vindicating and illustrating, just as I felt to be neces-

sary. I can positively vouch for the superior efficacy of the latter method for the higher zest and interest of the students, and, above all, for their surer advancement, and more solid proficiency in the lessons of the course. Now, to be neither one of the exact nor one of the physical sciences, there is none better furnished than theology is with the best and most desirable text-books ; inasmuch that, by a judicious arrangement of these, a pathway might be constructed which shall lead from the first elements to the most sublime and arduous speculations. A conversational course is just the holding of a continued parley between the professor and the students along this pathway, and is in fact the joint result of his views and of your preparations. The lights which cannot fail to be struck out between the professor and the students under such a process—the adjustment of his different explanations to your different habitudes of thought or states of intelligence—the facility wherewith he can accommodate his instructions to the subject-mind upon which he is operating—and also the facility wherewith he can ascertain the effect of these instructions,—these are benefits wholly unattainable under the tuition of a mere lectureship ; and they altogether compose what appears to me a resistless argument in behalf of that way for which I am now contending—the way, I am persuaded, of making the best scholars in every department of academic education, the best moralists, the best economists, the best theologians.

But is he never, it may be asked—is he never to radiate upon his students with any original light of his own ? Is he to act at all times in the capacity of a reflector only, or as an humble interpreter of the views, a mere copyist of the arrangements of others ? Are we to understand, more especially, that there is to be an entire abolition of that ancient method of lecturing by which the Scottish universities have been so long and so honourably distinguished ? for it is to this that Scottish literature is indebted for much of its highest authorship. It is well known that many of the best works which have been produced in this land of intellect were prepared, in the first instance, for the class-room, and found at length their way through this medium to the press. And, besides, can it be affirmed of any of the sciences that they are stationary ? and, although the subject-matter of theology is unalterably fixed by that authority which dictated the volumes of inspiration, and which hath pronounced a curse on the man who shall add thereunto, yet is there not a constant necessity for accommodating both the vindication of this authority and the illustration of this subject-matter to the ever-varying spirit and philosophy of the times ? Grant the doctrine to be immutable, this is only saying that there can be no change in the substance of it ; yet, with the ever-shifting phraseology of our

current literature, there may be an infinity of changes in the expression of it. Besides, as truth, though at all times one and inflexibly the same, can be translated into every language, and even into every dialect of the same language, from that which will convey it best to the homely peasant, to that which will recommend it best to the cultured and lofty academic ; so also may it be turned into multifarious, or rather into endless diversities of application. On this last ground, indeed, theology may be regarded to be as inexhaustible as any other of the sciences ; and if there be room, it may well be urged—if there be room in theology for new authorship from year to year, is there not also room from one generation to another for a new lectureship in the theological chair ? On these various considerations, and without our having adverted to the new lights which philology, and history, and travel, and the gradual developments of prophecy, are ever casting on the subject-matter of inspiration, is not theology as much a progressive and accumulating science as any other which can be named in the encyclopædia of human learning ? And does not that professor, therefore, lay a freezing arrest on the growth and augmentation of a naturally growing and augmenting subject, who but follows, without deviation, in the track of his predecessors, or but carries his disciples, year after year, through the same unvarying round of antiquated text-books ?

There is much of force and justness in these interrogations ; and we shall not avail ourselves of the reply, that most of the objects which have now been specified might be provided for in the extemporaneous or questionnaire course. We fully admit that in theology, as well as in all the other sciences, there is indefinite room for novelties both of thought and illustration ; and when the most important of these are to be propounded, our own preference most assuredly is for the utmost efforts both of elaborate thought, and if not of elaborate, at least of choice and well-weighed phraseology in the preparation of them ; in other words, while I would have the professor to expound colloquially all that is best in the existent literature of his profession, I would have him to put forth all originalities of his own through the medium of written lectures, whether these originalities should lie in the argument, or in the mode of putting the argument. I would have him always to write, whenever there is a chance or a likelihood of his writing differently, and at the same time better in some one respect or other from aught that has been already written ; and though not better in substance, yet better in arrangement, or in style, or in the property of adaptation to the spirit and the habitudes of our most recent literature. If there be any topic, in fact, on which a book would be pertinent, and called for, and acceptable to the public, that is the topic on which a series of lectures would

be alike pertinent, and should be alike acceptable to a class. Let the professor then have any favourite walk in theology—let him have the feeling of certain defects or desiderata in any of the parts of its widely extended literature—let him have the confidence in himself that on these he could bestow either a more conclusive reasoning or a more vivid and effective illustration than are to be found in any of our standard and accessible works,—and then I should say that his very highest effort of composition upon these would not be an idle and unproductive expenditure. It is truly to concentrate the force and quality of this composition that I would relieve him from the composition of an entire system. It is for the precise object of ensuring his contributions to theological literature that I would not have him to diffuse and so attenuate himself by toiling at the work of authorship over the whole round of theology. It may be a misdirection, and so a waste of energy, to strive at doing better what Butler and Paley have done so well ; and therefore I should like him to give this energy unbroken and unexhausted to some independent products of his own. When engaged with the lessons of his text-books, he reflects in conversation upon his students the light of others. Any original lessons of his own he may give in writing. In this way you will have more of them, and I may add also you will have more of him. It is a far more strenuous, because more of what may be called a creative exercise to write than to talk. He ought not to incur the fatigue of this creative process with any topic on which he has been already superseded by the hopeless, the unattainable excellence of those who have gone before him. But when he can really add, or really ameliorate, let him put forth all his strength upon lectures, even to exhaustion. You have thus a twofold advantage. In the questionary, which I would further call the regular course, you are placed under the tutorage of the best authors in theology ; and parallel to this, you have the best efforts of your living instructor concentrated in supplementary or episodal lectures of his own.

We are persuaded that with this treatment of the business of a class, there would have been a far brighter emanation of theological literature from the colleges of Scotland. You can understand how it should have been more precious in quality—I believe it might have been also more copious in the amount of it. We can expect no original contributions from the men who have worn themselves out by the drudgery of their immense and ponderous compilations : they feel no warrant for their authorship, when they feel that they have been outdone by some men in all things. It might not have been so, had they only spared themselves for the effort of outdoing all men in some things. They might thus have acquitted

themselves of a double function. They might, by means of their conversational course, have soundly and thoroughly taught the existing lessons of theology; they might, by means of their own subsidiary lectures, have pushed forward the limits of the science.

There is doubtless one very precious contribution which might be made by a professor who grapples, and that not only in the way of practical teaching, but in the way of literary execution with the whole system. He might construct not merely a syllabus, but a syllabus more or less expanded of a theological course. This has been ably done by Dr. Hill of St. Andrews, who had the faculty beyond most men of comprehensive and luminous arrangement. We shall have occasion at a posterior stage of our course to avail ourselves of the important service which he has rendered to theology; and we shall only remark at present that such a valuable offering as he has made to the science came from him more naturally at the termination than at the outset of his professional career. Other compends, in virtue of the yearly accessions which are made to sacred learning, may at length be called for; but they who have not only described a lengthened course of study, but have had a lengthened course of experience in teaching, are best qualified to frame them. I am not sure if I can recommend a more complete manual of Divinity than the one I have now adverted to, of which I may be permitted to speak with some degree of pride, as having issued from my own native university, and as being executed by the hand of my first master in the science. While engaged in the preparations to which I am now called, I have repeatedly occasion to consult him; and it is not without feeling that I open the identical copy of his heads of lectures marked over with my short-hand notes, and used by me when his student thirty years ago; or that when reading the lectures themselves, I can associate with so many of its passages the memory of a voice now hushed to silence, and that has passed away with all the living society and then busy interests of an older generation.

In conformity with these general views on the subject of your tuition in theology, I now proceed to announce the arrangements of the present winter; and I shall forbear any explanation of the ulterior parts of the course till the termination of the session, when I propose, along with directions for the prosecution of your studies through the summer, to offer a general prospectus of the field whercon we now enter, and in which we shall then have proceeded a certain way, but the greater part of which, I can foresee, will still lie before us.

I purpose, then, to have two lecture-days in the week, which will be appropriated to the delivery of my own written lucubrations; and I have

fixed on Monday and Tuesday for the fulfilment of that object. The questionary or conversational course will occupy three days—Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. There may be an occasional encroachment upon these by the extension at times of that lectureship wherewith every week commences according to our arrangement; and besides, when we meet with certain topics of peculiar interest in the text-book, the likelihood is that we may write as well as talk, and that the delivery of what is thus written may take up a good many successive days, during which our ordinary colloquial exercise will be altogether suspended.

Our first text-book will be Butler's Analogy of Religion to the Constitution and Course of Nature, with the various topics of which we shall be occupied till Christmas. I shall be as observant as possible of a harmony, in point of subject, between the lessons of the text-book and my own written lectures, which, during that period, and perhaps a little beyond it, will be occupied with natural theology, chiefly with the view to such an exposition, both of the leadings and of the defects in the light of nature, as should make you aspire after the light of revelation, and even indicate your way to it. We trust in this way to acquit ourselves of the most important of these preliminary topics which usually precede the inquiries of the student into the truth of Christianity.

Our second text-book will be Paley's Evidences. In the discussion of his various topics we shall carefully note whatever is most valuable in the reasonings or informations of other authors; and besides presenting you with as complete a view in the class as our time can afford of the Deistical Controversy, we hope so to guide your own readings upon the subject, that you might become thoroughly proficient in this highly important branch of the literature of your profession. Our questionary course will, at this stage of it, be accompanied with a series of lectures on a subject which you must all admit to be sufficiently akin to a text-book that is chiefly occupied in the historical evidence for the truth of Christianity. You are aware of the celebrated argument by which Hume attempted to demonstrate that a miracle was insusceptible of proof from human testimony. I am not satisfied with the replies which have been made to this argument—not even with Campbell's, which has long been reckoned a very triumphant one. I shall endeavour to present you with my own views on this radically important subject; and meanwhile, I would recommend to you the perusal of Campbell on Miracles, in the anticipation of that argument which we propose to bestow upon it.

For our third text-book, which will fully see us to the remainder of the session, we shall make use of Horne's pocket abridgment of his larger work.

on the Critical Knowledge and Study of the Holy Scriptures. Of the multifarious topics embraced in that publication, there are some that we shall have previously disposed of—as Natural Religion, and the Deistical Controversy. It suits particularly well, I think, that these should be immediately followed up by a subject on which Horne dilates with greater amplitude than on any other—what we should call the Bibliography of Scripture—a title under which we comprehend the formation of the canon, the distinct evidence which there is for the inspiration, as well as for the authenticity and genuineness of each of its books, the history of versions and manuscripts, with their various readings, and the principles upon which, amid these variations, the integrity of the text is ascertained. We shall then conclude with the rules, and perhaps with a few exemplifications of Biblical Criticism; and I feel quite assured, that at the close of the session we shall find ourselves in the possession of ample materials for the employment of your leisure months during the vacation, which I should like indeed to be so filled up, that on your return next winter, you may be in complete readiness for the more advanced studies, and the higher lessons of the second year of our course. The topic wherewith I mean to accompany this third text-book, is one on which both Paley and Horne have left ample room for supplementary observation and argument—I mean the internal evidences of Christianity, which shall form the third and last subject of my lectures for the season.

There is one advice which, though chiefly of a mechanical nature, would, I am sure, if followed up, add much to the comfort and the efficacy of both our tasks—I mean both of your preparations and of my examinations. I would not have you to bring your text-book to the class at all; but instead of it I would have you to bring a MS. note-book, in which you have marked all you consider as necessary out of the prescribed portion of the text-book to accomplish you for the examination of the day. To look for your reply in the text-book would be counteracting the purpose of the exercise altogether; but to look for it in your note-book, whenever you have occasion so to do, is a thing to which you are as much entitled as any man is to avail himself of the fruits of his own industry. Both parties will reap great benefit from this simple device. In the first place, it will warrant the professor in being very minute with his questions, and even though they relate to such matters as neither his own nor your memory ought to be charged with; and, in the second place, it will prove to you a most useful exercise; for there is really no better method by which to appropriate the subject-matter of any volume than to prepare an analysis, or even to have transcribed with your own hand the abridged contents of it. Let me further

recommend alternate blank leaves through the whole of your manuscript, to be followed up by such suggestions, or illustrations, or notices of kindred authorship, as might be given in the class-room. You will thus have, as the tangible product of your labours, a written compend, which, if not in itself a complete hand-book of all the literature that exists on the various topics of our course, will at least abound in those notices, by acting upon which you will be put in the way of acquiring it; and I feel satisfied that a far more effectual lodgement, both of the principles and details of our science, will be made in this way than could possibly have been achieved by any series of lectures whatever.

LECTURE II.

ADVICE TO STUDENTS ON THE CONDUCT AND PROSECUTION
OF THEIR STUDIES.

THE PRAYER.

O God, what our hands find to do may we do with all our might ; and forbid that in the urgency of this world's business the thought of God should be displaced from our hearts, or we should lose the daily and habitual reference of our spirits to the things of faith and of eternity. May we know what it is to combine diligence in business with fervency of spirit in Thy service, remembering the admonition of the Apostle, to be not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.

I am aware that upon this subject there might be a ridiculous, and even hurtful excess of pedagogical regulation. There might be a virtue ascribed to certain specific and subordinate directions which really does not belong to them. Grant but zeal and energy of purpose on your part, and these I affirm to be the unfailing guarantees of your ultimate success, even under a thousand imaginable varieties in the distribution of your hours and the succession or method of your studies. On this topic, then, I must not be so very particular as to ascribe a mystic efficacy to those circumstantialia which admit of being endlessly diversified without injury to your progress. On the other hand, I must not be so very general as to be satisfied with the delivery of certain vague and inapplicable truisms, and which are indeed so very true, that the utterance of them just leaves you no wiser than before, and as much at a loss what specifically to do, or how to turn yourselves.

There is a certain anxious minuteness of prescription for one's mental regimen which is just as little called for as it is in any ordinary healthful subject for his bodily regimen. There is a spontaneous or native healthfulness—a *vis medicatrix*, on the strength of which both mind and body are found to prosper under very great diversities of treatment. Let me, therefore, without laying an unmeaning stress upon things of indifference, or urging them upon you with the emphasis of a misplaced exaggeration, con-

fine myself to a few great essentials, which announce and vindicate their own importance on the moment they are stated, and which, at the same time, have such a distinct and definite character, that they each hold out a precise object to the mind, and each carry in them a plain direction for the management of your studies.

Let me then assign, first, your subjects of study in what I conceive to be the order of their importance ; and, secondly, the best habitudes of study for ensuring solid advancement in the acquisitions of scholarship.

I. What I recommend, then, as your *first* study in the order of importance, is the study of the Scriptures in your vernacular language. There may be two exceptions taken—not to the advice, but to the rank and precedence which I have assigned to it. It may, in the first instance, be imagined that the study of the evidence for the book should precede the study of the book—that its credentials should be first ascertained, and then that its contents should be diligently examined ; or, in other words, that the question who the letter comes from, should go before the question what the letter says. I would have been more ready to admit the force of this consideration, did I not believe that far the most effective of the Christian evidences are the *internal*; that the brightest and most satisfying credentials of Scripture are to be gathered from the contents of Scripture ; that the divine inspiration of the Bible is nowhere so legibly inscribed as on its own pages ; and that, therefore, by a daily, assiduous, and meditative perusal of the letter itself, if conducted with moral earnestness and the love of truth, you are in the likeliest circumstances for at length determining whence the letter comes. I am not grounding the advice of a daily and most attentive converse with your Bibles—I am not grounding it at present on the incumbent piety of the observation. I contend that, philosophically, and for the purely literary object of the right ordering of your scholarship, this, among all the advices which I have to offer, is entitled to the highest place in the scale.

A second exception may be taken, not to the advice, but, as before, to the priority of station which I have given it. Why, it may be asked, is my foremost recommendation the study of Scripture in the vernacular, and why not rather in the original language ? I have this reason for it. The common English Bible can, generally speaking, be made the subject of more rapid, and therefore of more frequently repeated perusal than either the Hebrew Old or the Greek New Testament. Now, grant that though not scrupulously accurate in all its individual parts, yet that it is a faithful translation on the whole, and then mark the distinct benefit of the exercise

which I am now prescribing for you. Will you not through this more accessible medium come more frequently into contact with the substance and matter of the book? Will you not arrive sooner thereby at a familiar acquaintance with the contents of it, and while a more familiar, will it not also substantially, and in the main, be a correct acquaintance? Is there such a difference, for example, between the common translation and Campbell's translation of the Four Gospels, that, after studying to the uttermost, and drawing the full sense out of first the one and then the other, the variation in the result will be of any more than a small fractional importance to the whole mass of that doctrine and information which can be obtained from either of them? And might not the very same thing be said of the difference between just our common translation and the one which is perhaps awaiting us, after that, by the labours of Scripture criticism, the *beau-ideal* of a perfect or a best possible translation has at length been realized? Now, my recommendation is this: admitting the minor deficiencies of our English Bible, still you should turn to its utmost advantage that readier access which its being English opens up to its almost accurate representation of sacred truth and sacred history. For this purpose, I would have you to keep up diligent and daily converse with that book, which, with all its imputed shortcomings, is sufficient, we all do admit, to guide and enlighten the families of our general population. Just try to master it as you would any other English book of multifarious contents, but pervaded withal by one great ascendant principle, and by the unities of a harmonious and comprehensive system of doctrine. Gather as much from it as you would have done if English had been its primitive language, or as any intelligent Englishman might do who is ignorant of its primitive language. There is, be assured, a very great deal that can be achieved in this way; and my reason for urging it in this way is, that the achievement can be made thereby in shorter time, and so your whole progress in theology be accelerated. You can treasure up the informations of the book; you can become thoroughly conversant with its histories; you can compare Scripture with Scripture; you can note its parallel passages; you can collect those innumerable lights which strike the observation in the very act of pursuing the train of its marginal references; you can, more especially, confront the prophecies of the Old Testament with the counterpart narratives either of the Old or of the New. It is by these and similar exercises that many a cottage patriarch, with no other medium than his mother tongue, becomes a greater proficient in the wisdom and doctrines of the Bible than the most accomplished linguist or grammarian. Let me add, you can perform, in this way too, what Franck, in his *Guide to the Study of Holy Scripture*,

calls the analysis of its particular books: you can obtain possession of the general scope and design of each epistle. These are invaluable acquisitions; and what I labour to impress is, that virtually they can be made by means of the English Bible, and of it alone, subject of course to such corrections as your posterior studies will enable you to make. But meanwhile do not wait till these studies are accomplished: make what you can of your Bibles now. The acquisitions which I recommend now to be made, and to be made forthwith, by means of the English Scriptures, will not thwart, but rather aid and facilitate the labours of that more delicate and profound criticism which is afterwards to be studied and made progress in by means of the Greek and Hebrew Scriptures. Just as the context illuminates the text, will the general biblical knowledge which you may obtain through the medium of your native language, be of avail to your special scrutiny into the meaning of the Bible's separate portions through the medium of its original languages. There is much, very much, of biblical learning that I want you to get in English—just as much, in fact, as is practicable in English, for the plain reason that it can be got faster in this way, and therefore to get it in Greek or Hebrew, is to bring upon a number of most useful acquisitions the burden of a most unnecessary servitude. It is a wasteful expenditure of strength, in fact; and the argument becomes irresistible when you consider that this previous learning is a real auxiliary to the philological criticism; whereas the danger on the other hand is, that if not made previously, the criticism might absorb the whole man, and so withdraw his attention from the important generalities of doctrine and information, in virtue of the intense direction which it took to the mere renderings of isolated and controverted passages. It is not, most assuredly, for the purpose of depreciating the ulterior achievements of criticism that I thus speak, but for the purpose of securing their due prominence to other objects which are nearer at hand, and which are apt to be overlooked and neglected by men who, in their exclusive demand for language, evince a certain defect of comprehensiveness, and perhaps I may add too, a certain spice of scholastic pedantry.

My next advice, and which I place the second in the scale, is that, along with the exercise which I have now recommended, you do study the Bible in its original languages. I should be anticipating the future lessons of my course, were I to deliver now the rules or the principles of Scripture Criticism; but meanwhile, I should like you to make a daily habit of mastering, even though it should be to the extent of a few verses only, a portion of the Hebrew Old and of the Greek New Testament. I want you to become quite familiar with the first vocables of inspiration; I want you

to approximate indefinitely to the reading of the original, with the same fluency that you read the vernacular Scriptures. This needs only on your part the perseverance of a regular and sustained exercise. The difficulties of the outset will be abundantly compensated by the felt charm of a growing facility ; and I venture to affirm of the great majority now before me, that would you only commence with firm purpose, and persevere with unfaltering constancy, you should in a single twelvemonth be able to read so currently as to achieve one chapter of the Greek New Testament, another of the Hebrew Bible, and a third of the Septuagint, without almost a perceptible addition to the labours of the day. And in the course of a few rotations with these volumes, what a practical acquaintance should you obtain with the languages of holy writ—an acquaintance, no doubt, which, merely of itself, does not constitute the art of Scripture Criticism, but which would prodigiously facilitate your acquisition of the art. You are at present on high vantage-ground. Now is the time for accumulating or laying up in store what may be called the raw materials of many a future argument. Yours is the season of youth and vigorous exertion, and withal, which is of first-rate importance in the study of languages, it is the season of most impressible memory, when the greatest variety of facts, however unlike or however loosely associated, do by frequent reiteration leave such traces of themselves that through life they are indelible. It is thus that the reiteration of an oft-consulted dictionary will at length grave upon your memory, as with a pen of iron, the very words which Apostles wrote, and which prophets and holy men of God did articulate under the movements of their inspiration. You will be at home in the original Scriptures ; and though not even then versant in those principles which constitute the science of Scripture Criticism, you will at least be rich in the materials of the science. I cannot affirm that you will in consequence of this particular study obtain a greatly more rectified view of Christian doctrines than it is competent for the mere English student to obtain from our English translation. I honestly do not believe that there are such errors or defects in the English Bible as to leave room for any material rectification ; and I will not therefore, at the expense of a truth so cheering and comfortable, exalt beyond its legitimate measure that Biblical Criticism, which, nevertheless, I would have you all to study ; and then I should feel confident of an enamoured few, who, giving themselves passionately up to the original languages, might become the Mills, and the Wetsteins, and the Griesbachs, and the Michaelises of Scotland. I want the many to be intelligent scholars in this department, upon which there would be the chance, or rather the certainty, of a few being masters and discoverers therein—the critics,

and the emendators, and the Biblists of our coming generation ; they qualified to be the authors in this species of literature, and the bulk of our clergy at least so qualified for appreciating their excellence as to constitute a sufficient literary public to encourage them in their labours. We should not on this high and lettered walk arrive at another orthodoxy than what in the main lies patently before the eyes of our general population in the Bibles which they use. But remember that you are set for the defence of orthodoxy, and that in this age of licentious speculation it needs to be defended—that heresy can put on the guise of scholarship ; and if on that ground you are unable to meet her, she may by a single quotation paralyze you—that even meagre Socinianism can furnish its specious plausibilities with Bible sentences in Greek and Hebrew characters, and that it lies with you to detect the treachery, and to disarm it. An endowed and an educated Church is the bulwark of orthodoxy. She may not at all times be animated by its spirit ; but it is generally by her means, by her formularies, by her colleges, and, above all, by the prowess and the literary championship of her sons, that the letter of it is kept inviolate. It is thus that the hierarchy of England, with her erudite scholars and massive theologians—her men of armour and colossal achievement—has stood the foremost in the battles of the faith. And I should like that Scotland wielded as mighty a polemic arm,—that an Establishment which has done so much for the religion of families, stood in completed panoply for all services, labouring with one arm to foster the Christianity of our parishes, but with another to ward off the pestilence whether of Deism or of heresy from our borders.

I should perhaps apologize to the more advanced students for the very rudimental character of the advice which I have now given. But I do it in the confidence that could I only prevail on you all to begin this undertaking, though only with a view at first to a complete practical acquaintance with the original Scriptures, there must be a goodly number among you with whom it would not terminate there. Calculating merely on the varieties of human taste and talent, I should anticipate of so many, that the habit which I now recommend must ripen into an affection for the erudition, and more especially for the sacred erudition of other languages than their own. To indulge this, I have no doubt that they must spontaneously find their way both to the Latin of our Continental theology and the Greek and Latin of the Christian Fathers. I hold it of importance that some at least should be extensively read in these too unfrequented tracks of authorship ; and I do confess it my ambition that the lessons of a lore so venerable should never depart from us.

My next advice, which I need scarcely have uttered at present, but with a view to mark what I esteem the order of its importance, is, that after standing acquitted of your scriptural studies for the day, there should be a diligent preparation on your part of each prescribed lesson in the text-books. This, of course, I exact from all ; but from many I expect a great deal more. I do not speak at present of the notes which you may take here, whether of the lectures or conversations, and expand them afterwards at home. In this matter you have unlimited liberty, and may do just as you please. But I speak with particular reference to the books which I shall recommend for your perusal on the various topics of the course : to this I mainly look for your instruction in the subject-matter of theology. I shall do my best to direct your readings ; and I confidently hope that by a very great number among you, these readings, to a greater or less extent, will be executed. And here, too, there will be room for the development of the interminable varieties of human genius. While I should like you all to have a general acquaintance with the literature of theology, yet I cannot but suppose that each will proportion his attention variously. Each may have his own favourite walk. One may feel his strongest affinity to be towards the evidences ; another be in his congenial element when grappling with the difficulties ; a third may delight in the adaptations of Christianity to human nature ; a fourth in the adaptations of prophecy to the history of the world ; a fifth in the doctrines, whether as comprising a regular system of truth, or as fitted to comfort, to regenerate, to moralize the heart which receives them ; a sixth may give his utmost strength to some one selected topic which he prosecutes with all the devotion of amateurship. Your general scholarship I hold to be indispensable ; yet I could not without violence to humanity, constituted as it is, forbid these endless diversities of taste and of application which I have enumerated. The complexional difference of minds is as great as that of faces : I shall therefore look for an exceeding variety in the direction of your theological readings ; and it is well that we have such a fulness of theological authorship to meet this variety.

I should have mentioned under my first advice—that is, your diligent study of the English Bible, why it is that a person wholly unschooled in the original tongue, may nevertheless become an intelligent systematic theologian. But you already know the explanation of this. Those parts of divine truth which enter into the composition of a system, are also those which most pervade the sacred volume, and are of most frequent recurrence in it ; and when, therefore, you have this security for the most accurate translation, that a greater amount of consentaneous light descends upon

the passages which contain them. Generally speaking, the individual passages are faithfully rendered to his hand ; and the only task which remains to him for the purpose of making out a system, is that of comparing Scripture with Scripture. You will further perceive how it is, that on many questions such a person may be an able and intelligent controversialist. The truth is, that though, on the one hand, our vernacular language had been the Hellenistic Greek, there would still have been controversies ; or though, on the other, the message had come to us in the *ipsissima verba* of our English translation, the great bulk of our present controversies would still have remained to us. It is not necessary, in order to have disputes about the meaning of an author, that he should write in a different language from our own ; and it is a great mistake to imagine, that for the decision even of our most important controversies in theology, they must be brought to philology as the ultimate court of appeal. I am not aware, for example, that philology can do anything towards the dissipation of that obscurity which hangs over the topic of the sin against the Holy Ghost, or of the sin unto death. I by no means think that the solution here is impracticable ; but I think that the materials for the solution lie as much within the reach of an intelligent Englishman, ignorant of Greek, as of the most accomplished critic or grammarian. This is not an occasion for entering into the special consideration of these passages ; but I may remark, by the way, on the manner in which we should receive the clear generalities of Scripture, even while the burden of an apparent exception is lying upon them. "The blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin" is such a generality, not made known to us by the compilation of many passages, as a general law of nature is made known by a compilation of phenomena, but made known to us by one authoritative declaration, even as a general law is sometimes clearly and conclusively ascertained by one experiment, when that happens to be an *experimentum crucis*. Now, the question is, whether shall we refuse to ourselves the instruction and the comfort of a gospel declaration till the anomaly is cleared up ; or shall we only refuse to ourselves the intellectual gratification that one feels on looking at the harmony of an unexcepted system ? We should take the latter part ; and this is precisely what astronomers did under the one unsolved difficulty in their science, to which I have more than once alluded. They had got hold of a general expression which harmonized all the phenomena of the heavens, save one. This of itself was a mighty enlargement to them ; and they did not wait for the resolution of that one, ere they should apply the principle in question to the computation of all other casual movements and appearances, for in these the computation was unerring. And, in like manner, we must

not refuse the comfort or the direction of what is clear in the Bible till we have generalized all the passages on a given topic to the degree of unaccepted and universal. We may not be able to reconcile the declaration, that the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin, with the doctrine of the sin that is insusceptible of forgiveness. But we ought not, on that account, to suspend our faith in those passages where the general doctrine is clearly recognised—as that, Whosoever believeth in Christ shall be saved ; Where sin abounds, grace does much more abound ; Whosoever believeth shall not be confounded or put to shame. The full information and comfort of these ought to be taken *instantly* ; and all that you do forego by the refractory passage is that luxury which the rationalists of theology aspire after. In estimating the soundness of the analogy, you should try it by the specific purpose for which it is used. It may be most competent and effective for that, though not capable of being extended further. The great lesson which I wished to illustrate, is that the generalizings of theology should defer as much to the findings of Scripture Criticism, as the generalizings of science do to the findings of observation.

My fourth advice relates to the practice of composition. It comes properly after the one which I have just given ; because you must first import knowledge before you can export it again for the benefit of others. By the former direction, you may become wise unto yourself ; by the present, you may acquire the power of making the best and most impressive conveyance of this wisdom to the minds of your fellow-men. I would have you to write daily, and to write elaborately. Even were you called upon by other engagements to write much, and therefore rapidly, I would have you to observe at least one hallowed hour for your highest efforts of a strict and severe, and choice composition. It is a mistake that elaboration in this exercise necessarily or even generally leads to verbiage, that worthless result of a vain and gaudy ambition. When you sit down to the creative work of composition, your first elaboration should be the elaboration of thoughts ; and you should have no other concern about words than as the instruments by which these thoughts may be most clearly and correctly, and withal energetically rendered. The object of elaborate composition is not to multiply words, but to select them—not to luxuriate in copiousness or variety of expression, but to condense and to chasten, and to lop away all that is meaningless or redundant. You have to cast about for language, no doubt, but it is for most expressive language ; and in so doing, you have to reject many a word and many a phrase which have presented themselves to notice in the midst of your ponderings, lest the quality of the composition should have been diluted, and so enfeebled thereby. What the pro-

fuse writer with facility admits, the elaborate puts away as he would the chaff of useless excrescences. He feels, it is true, a solicitude for words, but only for such words as are instinct with the force and fulness of that sentiment under which he is labouring. In such hands, even a multitude of words is not verbiage, because each word is impregnated with meaning; and there is a strength in his splendour, and a splendour in his strength, just because the phraseology that he employs has in it a metallic weight as well as a metallic lustre. They are the thoughts which have germinated the words; and whether they be thoughts of beauty or of power, they must tinge with their own character the language into which they effloresce. It is when the style goes beyond the subject—it is when there is a pomp of phraseology that exceeds the real worth or magnitude of the topics which are invested by it—it is when the subject-matter is well-nigh lost sight of in the blazonry of the language by which it has been attempted to set it forth,—then truly may it be said of the writer, that he spends himself in vain, that he labours for that which satisfieth not. I deprecate all such labour, and yet persist in saying that elaborate composition should form a regular part of your daily exercise. When the work is rightly gone about, it is a high mental exercise, and the high mental faculties of intellect, and imagination, and feeling, are all pressed into the service of it. The words have only an instrumental part in this operation, and stand related to the essential business of composition just as the colours which a painter uses with his hand do to the conceptions of his genius.

I am the more solicitous for this habit, that I am aware of none which so fixes and consolidates one's views on any given subject of inquiry. It is just because so much a purely thinking exercise—it is just because, when going in quest of those words which shall be the most appropriate symbols of thought, the mind must engage itself so closely with the realities or the archetypes of thought, that to write upon a subject is the likeliest way to arrive at a clear and conclusive opinion about it. Your else cloudy or evanescent notions, by being thus bodied forth in language, settle into durability as well as into definiteness of shape and outline. In the act of giving them a local habitation in your manuscripts, they seem to acquire a local habitation in your mind; and there is a stability, a sort of substance imparted to them which they actually had not before. On these accounts, I do infinitely regret that my opportunities of converse with you on this particular ground are so exceeding scanty. One discourse from each of you in the year is not nearly enough either for you to produce or for me to listen to; yet, as things are at present constituted, I cannot do more; and, till the plethoric magnitude of the work be reduced, till relieved of this

compression by a subdivision of labour, through the means at least of another labourer, I have no prospect of being able to do more. But meanwhile, might not you do much among yourselves? To realize the motto of *Nulla dies sine linea*, is it necessary to stimulate and sustain your habit of composition, that each line must be read in the hearing, or submitted to the judgment of another? The course will present an infinity of topics both for essays and sermons; and I shall occasionally point out those which I conceive to be fittest, whether for your own solitary exercise, or for discussion in your societies.

But the mention of this leads me to remark, that a society is a great engine for upholding the activity of those who evidence in fact their interest in its literary or professional object, by being voluntarily enlisted among its members. Such an institution may be turned to the best of purposes, and especially be of powerful effect in supplementing the unavoidable deficiencies of your formal or compulsory education. Convinced as I am of the permanent results, and, when under proper regulation, of the permanently good results which the practice of elaborate writing has on the whole condition of your intellect, I cannot but regard with peculiar earnestness whatever tends to stimulate this exercise, or to multiply the occasions of it. But I must here express the serious doubts which I have on the subject of debating societies, and must confess myself to feel a much clearer preference for what I should rather style deliberative societies. The strength of my apprehension is just in proportion to the assurance which I feel, and have already expressed, that nothing contributes more to fasten a sentiment or a doctrine upon the mind, than to have written in the defence of it. It may be well enough in the students of another profession to have their combative societies, and to appoint their special pleaders on each side of the question for the evening; but I am not altogether fond of special pleading in theology. There is in it a sort of tampering with great principles, which is somewhat hazardous, to say the least of it; and it does seem to place an inquirer in unfair circumstances to place him under the necessity of advocating what is wrong. It is decidedly my own preference, if the thing could be so managed, that you should meet, not on the business of controversy, but on the business of investigation; that the one or two essayists for the night should give not necessarily opposite views, but each his own view on the subject which had been formerly prescribed for them; and that this should be followed up by general and extemporaneous converse on the part of the members, either upon the merits of these written performances, or upon the questions discussed in them. It is a mistake to suppose that there is nothing for a speaker to say because there is no-

thing to controvert. It is enough if he can add, if he can further illustrate, if he can confirm the positions of those who have gone before him by new arguments or informations of his own ; or, if his militant propensity be very strong, and if he can meet with no present object on which to discharge it, still it might be pertinent enough to hold gladiatorship with all that is formidable in the infidelity or the unsound theology of authors. I am quite sensible that, even under the system which I recommend, all controversy among yourselves neither can, nor indeed ought to be precluded. But then you will observe that the part you take in it is altogether spontaneous ; and, besides, one is not in such danger of talking himself into heresy as he is of writing himself into heresy. It is this last which I dread ; and if there be justice in the apprehension, it goes, you must perceive, to confirm all that I have said on the power of elaborate composition as an instrument whereby to rivet not your conceptions alone, but your convictions of a subject. I have had repeated experience of this tendency in myself ; I have had the frequent observation of it in others amid the controversies both of speech and of authorship. If one have only talked adversely, there still remains the hope of his giving in ; but if he have written, even whether it cometh forth in the shape of a pamphlet or not, he is perfectly irreclaimable.

In each of these societies the number of individuals should be rather small than otherwise, that the exercise of composition may come round more frequently. There is none which I should like better to see in busy and prosperous action, than a society for biblical criticism, which ought to be select in point of attendance, since none but the very *élite* of the Hall for taste and skill in the languages should be admitted into it. The elucidation of difficult passages—the history of particular books—the general scope and design of each of them—the discussion of controverted texts, with the evidence that lay in various readings for or against them,—these would supply matter for innumerable theses ; and they would also present definite objects of preparation for that subsequent converse which occupied the remainder of the meeting. We are quite sure that a society like this, if soundly and ably conducted, would be eyed with peculiar regard ; and that the most enlightened friends of our Church would take a vivid interest in the progress of their labours.

Before quitting this subject, let me observe, that here, too, Nature will give proof of her wonted variety in the gifts and faculties of her children. Some of you will be found to make the most effective conveyance of your thoughts by elaborate writing, others by extemporaneous language. The two certainly may be blended in the same individual ; but on this matter

I would advise none to attempt compounding the two at one and the same moment. What I mean is, that you should never try to make out a sentence partly on the strength of what you have written, and partly on the strength of such words as might be immediately suggested to supply the deficiencies of your recollection. In the ambiguity between these two exercises, when both are attempted simultaneously, the mind is neutralized; and what I should advise is, that in every single exertion of this sort, you either write wholly or extemporize wholly. It is true that after the delivery *memoriter* of a written paragraph, you may leave the preparation for a time; and, after expatiating so long in words of instant occurrence, you may again revert to it. There might be no embarrassment in this way of it; but there assuredly will be, if in the same identical moment the mind shall vacillate between an effort to remember words which you already have indited, and a direct effort of attention to the ideas or realities of your subject, thereby to suggest or originate words for the occasion. Be assured, to use a familiar expression, there is not a likelier method than this of falling through; and while I repeat the advice which I have already given, that when you do compose, you should do it strenuously and with all your might, I would further say, that to obtain the practice and the power of extemporizing, you should venture upon the experiment without any other preparation than the preparation of thought, and see whether your luminous conceptions will not at length find vent for themselves in expressive and appropriate language. I am far from thinking that all or even the majority will succeed in this exercise; but though there should be only a few, the time is coming when their alertness and promptitude and daring might be of invaluable service. In the business of debate, though great execution is often done by the heavy artillery of the prepared speeches, yet the effect of these is incalculably aided by the well-timed discharge of those smaller fire-arms which are used in the skirmishings of the extemporaneous warfare. I only knew one individual in our Church who had this talent in perfection, and in his hands it was any thing but a small fire-arm. Would that there were twenty alike able and intrepid and as pure as I judge him to have been on many of the great questions of ecclesiastical polity.* The very presence of such would have resistless effect on the divisions of our judicatories. But it forms a very rare combination when so much power and so much promptitude go together, or when one unites in his speaking the quickness of opportune suggestion with the momentum of weighty and laborious preparation. It is to me a marvellous, I could almost say an enviable faculty, and never more to be envied than when, in a minute or two, one is visited

* The allusion here is to Dr. Andrew Thomson.

by the very thought and the very turn of expression which would just have suited the purpose, but after the occasion is irrecoverably gone by—and which, had it but occurred at the moment, would not only have parried the home-thrust of his antagonist, but would have sent it back again with double effect to the quarter whence it came.

My concluding advice on the subject-matter of your studies, and which I place after all the former advices, connected as they are with your professional literature, is, that you give as much time as you can conveniently spare over and above theology, to the pursuits of general literature. Though I place this object last, and I would even further say least, for those who have fully entered on the ecclesiastical vocation, yet this, assuredly, is not because I hold the object to be insignificant. It was not so held by the great Reformers of our Church—the Luthers, and the Calvins, and the Knoxes, and, to confine the examples to our own land, the Andrew Melvilles, and the Samuel Rutherfurds, and the Halyburtons of other days—men who united with their depth of principle the depth of profoundest scholarship; and bright in learning as in piety, at one and the same time, evinced the lofty spirit of Christian apostles, and the spirit, lofty too in its way, of cultured and high-toned academics. There was nought of the drivelling or the superstitiously weak about the Christianity of these men; but strong in science as they were in sacredness, they compelled an homage to their cause. We should like to see the Church so represented in all ages, that while society should be impressed by the general intelligence of her clergy, there should at least be a few who, outpeering all their fellows, might be able to company with men on the highest walks of philosophy, and there, in the greatness of their conscious strength, urge the gospel argument with such intrepidity and effect as might cause Christianity to be respected in the midst of our literary circles. This is a service peculiarly needed in the present age, both that a licentious philosophy may be overawed, and that the association which still lingers in the public mind between infidelity and intellect might be effectually done away. And besides, the same reason which makes it expedient that Christianity should be translated into all languages, makes it also expedient that it should be presented to the various orders of a chequered and complicated society in all the styles of the same language, from the homely dialect of our general population to the classic or philosophical dialect of the highest scholars, the most accomplished *savans* of a community. And so, while I should like the great majority of those who are here present to be capable in after-life of forcibly and intelligibly addressing even the most rustic congregations of our land, yet I should also like that all of you were more or less tinctured

with the phraseology of the current literature of our nation, and that some of you should be able to deck the various themes of your profession both with the imagery of genius and with all the graces of beauteous and tasteful representation.

We are aware of a certain sensitive and illiberal prejudice on the subject of human learning wherewith we cannot at all sympathize—as if the development of truth in any one quarter could be injurious to the cause of truth in any other quarter of possible contemplation ; or as if the glorious harmonies which obtain between the economy of revelation and the economy of nature did not serve to manifest a common Author for them both, and, at the same time, to pour a flood of evidence and illustration over the doctrines of Christianity. The parables of Scripture are standing memorials for the use of those analogies which are furnished by the intelligent observation whether of nature, of history, or of science, for the exposition and enforcement of the lessons of the gospel. The references made by Paul to the literature and mythology of the Greeks might serve both as guides and examples to the ministers of the present day ; and on this subject it should never be forgotten that the most learned of all the apostles was also the most effective of them all. We observe beside, that the psalmists and prophets of the olden dispensation do constantly illustrate invisible by visible things ; and like as our Saviour, in His passing notice of the lilies of the field, offered the tribute of His admiration to the loveliness of a natural object, so from the compositions of David, and Isaiah, and the author of the book of Job, it would appear that among the communions of a higher inspiration, they, on the theme of creation and its glories, were awake to all the soul and sentiment of poetry. There is nought either in true poetry or in true philosophy that is adverse to revelation. “ The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein ;” and instead of the cross-lights which many apprehend, there will, when soundly conducted, be struck out the light of many precious and pleasing confirmations between the study of His works and the study of His word. There is, it will be found, a harmony of principle between that docility which is inculcated by modern science to the lessons of experience, and that docility which is inculcated by the gospel to the lessons of revelation. In the one there is the surrender of all theory to the evidence of observation, and hence a sound philosophy on the basis of ascertained facts. Altogether akin to this, in the other there is the surrender of all lofty imagination to the evidence of history, and hence a sound theology on the basis of ascertained facts also. And if the spirit which now reigns throughout in physical investigations lead to a higher estimate of the external argument, cer-

tain we are that every new step in the mental philosophy will add new strength and lustre to the internal argument for the truth of Christianity. In short, we have nothing to fear from the highest achievements that can possibly be made in any walk or on any quarter of the field of discovery ; and we repeat, that had we a few at least of the friends of religion able to keep pace with the growing philosophy of the times, we should bear off from thence an augmented strength to the cause of the gospel, and a new accession to its glories.

II. We now proceed to the second general division in this lecture of advice for the prosecution of your studies ; and having now assigned the respective subjects of your study in what I hold to be the order of their importance, let me forthwith, and as briefly as possible, state my ideas on the best habitudes of study for ensuring your solid advancement in the acquisitions of scholarship.

It may be expected, in the first place, that I should fix the proportional time which should be given to each of the pursuits that I have now specified. Now this I purposely abstain from. It is true that I have announced to you what I deem to be the order of their importance, and I of course should like that this made its due impression on the arrangements which each of you shall form ; but, after this, I must leave the arrangements very much to yourselves. I could not, in fact, without prejudice to a great and a high interest, prescribe, in the terms of a rigorous and invariable measurement, the relative degrees of attention which each student should observe towards each of the studies that I have already enumerated. I should not regard it as a well-conditioned state of things if, in this respect, there were a monotonous and a mechanical uniformity of practice amongst you. I am quite confident that a far greater result would be obtained by humouring the varieties of genius and inclination ; or, in other words, by such a latitude as should permit the main energies of each individual student to go forth in that direction whither his taste and his talent most naturally carried him. It is true I should regard him as unfit for the ministerial profession if he did not, in obedience to my first and strongest recommendation, hold frequent converse with his Bible, and that for the purpose of drawing from this book of God's counsel and of His message to a guilty world those doctrines and informations wherewith it is charged. And I further hold it most desirable that all of you should at least attain to the level of a respectable scholarship in the various things which have just been set before you. But many of you, I doubt not, in some things will rise above this level ; and it is altogether, I repeat, a question of your own individual taste and finding,

in what walk of study, or on what particular field of scholarship it is, that you are to attain the rank and superiority of masters. I would not, therefore, lay a restraint on the singular aptitudes or tendencies of so many for the original languages of Scripture ; nor on those of others for the evidences of our faith ; nor on those of others for the doctrines or subject-matter of theology ; nor on those of others for the practical and hortatory department of our profession ; nor on those of others for the work of societies, under which some might think it best to cultivate the extemporaneous talent, and some the talent for fine and energetic composition ; and lastly, I would not restrain the disposition to general literature and philosophy—more especially if I saw along with it the talent and the desire of converting it to a useful professional application, whether to strengthen some lesson of theology by new arguments, or to recommend and set it forth by new illustrations. There is a diversity of endowments in the economy of nature, even as in the economy of grace there is a diversity of gifts, by that Spirit who, instead of compounding any one individual into a perfect exemplar of all those abilities which are of service to the Church, “giveth to every man severally as he will.” And we do wrong to thwart such a mechanism. We should thereby pervert from its obviously designed uses the apparatus, so to speak, that was put into our hands. We should not be marshalling aright the mental and the spiritual forces wherewith we had been intrusted, whether for fighting the battles, or for fulfilling the direct business of our Zion. It is by indulging, to a certain extent, the tendencies of each intellect and of each spirit, that we secure the best linguists, the best commentators, the best controversialists, the best expounders in the doctrinal, and the most impressive orators and heralds in the hortatory theology, the best judges or legislators for our courts, the best preachers for our parishes.

But while I would offer no pointed pedagogical deliverance as to the number of hours you should give to each exercise or study—while I would not thus distribute your time into the same regular portions for all, yet I would strongly recommend that each should make a regular distribution of his time for himself. I think I have deferred enough to the mental varieties that exist among the individuals of a class, when I abstain from prescribing identically and alike for all their proportions of grammatical, and critical, and doctrinal, and literary, and scientific study, but have expressed it as my preference that each individual should make the adjustment of his own proportions. I will not condescend on the number of divisions or on the length of each division in your plan ; but I would proclaim it as quite a category on the subject of intellectual discipline, that there should be a plan. I will not venture to say how many or how few hours should be as-

signed to each particular employment ; but I am perfectly clear that every hour should have its certain and its fixed employment. There is nothing of which I am more satisfied than that you should move from one occupation to another in the order of some succession to which you will adhere till you have found reason to alter it. The history of your day, if you want to make solid advancement in learning, must not be a desultory ramble from one object to another at the caprice or humour of the moment. It should not be a ramble but a rotation, where each hour has its employment, and each employment has its hours for the full and satisfying discharge of it. You will make, I believe, tenfold the progress in this way that you would, if living at random, you abandoned yourself to the fortuitous and ever-varying influences which, in the tide of unforeseen circumstances, were brought to bear upon you. It is making the most of time thus to methodize it ; and I esteem it no light advantage that in virtue of such a system, you might ensure both your scholarship and your health ; for such should be the productiveness of the hours which you do employ in the prosecution of the one, that there should be hours to spare for the recreation which might be indispensable to the other. Forbid that I should crush your rising energies by the impositions of a severe taskmaster ; or that, amid the labours of a thoughtful and contemplative solitude, you should not daily and plentifully taste the enjoyments of liberty. Be assured, there is a charm in all this regularity which will inconceivably enhance the pleasure both of your relaxations and of your duties ; and after the hours that you have spent vigorously and successfully in your apartments, you will find the beauty of your walks and the animating converse of your fellows to be all the more delightful. I can scarcely imagine a more grateful alternation than that which takes place between prosperous study at home, and cheerful society or exercise abroad. At your age of buoyant spirits and hopeful aspiring intellect, it will give a zest to all you do, and season every hour with enjoyment.

Before I conclude, then, this rather lengthened admonition, let me repeat to you my earnest assurance of the vast power and advantage to a student of regulated industry. In point of result, I should expect more from the perseverance and the painstaking even of mediocrity, than I should from the wild undirected sallies of lofty, but withal reckless and wayward genius. One may act the part of a harlequin with his mind as well as with his body ; and there is a sort of mental agility which always gives me the impression of a harlequin. Anything which can be spoken of as a feat is apt to suggest this association. That man, for example, was a thorough harlequin, in both senses of the word, who boasted that he could throw off

a hundred verses of poetry while he stood upon one foot. There was something for wonder in this ; but it is rarely by any such exploit that we obtain deep, and powerful, and enduring poetry. It is by dint of steady labour—it is by giving enough of application to the work, and having enough of time for the doing of it—it is by regular painstaking and the plying of constant assiduities,—it is by these, and not by any process of legerdemain, that we secure the strength and the staple of real excellence. It was thus that Demosthenes, clause after clause, and sentence after sentence, elaborated, and that to the uttermost, his immortal orations ; it was thus that Newton pioneered his way, by the steps of an ascending geometry, to the mechanism of the heavens—and after which, he left this testimony behind him, that he was conscious of nothing else but a habit of patient thinking which could at all distinguish him from other men. He felt that it was no inaccessible superiority on which he stood, and it was thus that he generously proclaimed it. It is certainly another imagination that prevails in regard to those who have left the stupendous monuments of intellect behind them—not that they were differently exercised from the rest of the species, but that they must have been differently gifted. It is their talent, and almost never their industry, by which they have been thought to signalize themselves ; and seldom is it adverted to, how much it is to the more strenuous application of those commonplace faculties which are diffused among all, that they are indebted for the glories which now encircle their remembrance and their name. It is felt to be a vulgarizing of genius that it should be lighted up in any other way than by a direct inspiration from heaven ; and hence men have overlooked the steadfastness of purpose, the devotion to some single but great object, the unweariedness of labour that is given not in convulsive and preternatural throes, but by little and little, as the strength of the mind may bear it, the accumulation of many small efforts, instead of a few grand and gigantic but perhaps irregular movements on the part of energies that are marvellous. Men have overlooked these as being indeed the elements to which genius owes the best and the proudest of her achievements. They cannot think that aught so utterly prosaic as patience, and painstaking, and resolute industry, have any share in the upholding of a distinction so illustrious. These are held to be ignoble attributes never to be found among the demigods, but only among the drudges of literature ; and it is certainly true, that in scholarship there are higher and lower walks. But still the very highest of all is a walk of labour. It is not by any fantastic jugglery, incomprehensible to ordinary minds, and beyond their reach—it is not by this that the heights of philosophy are scaled. So said he who towers so far above all his fellows ;

and whether viewed as an exhibition of his own modesty, or as an encouragement to others, this testimony of Sir Isaac may be regarded as one of the most precious legacies that he has bequeathed to the world.

* * * * *

I have been the more earnest in this explanation,* as I feel assured that, without those influences which are derived to the heart by prayer, the sacredness of your studies is no guarantee for the sacredness of your spirit or character. All the literature of Christianity may not Christianize you ; and it is truly a possible thing that, while your biblical scholarship is growing apace, the heart may be wholly untouched by the lessons of the Bible. This has been oft experienced in the business of the clerical profession ; and it strikingly marks the earthliness of our nature, that, in very proportion to our familiarity with the themes of religion, may be our insensibility to the force of their awful and eternal import. Our sermons may solemnize others, while they do not solemnize ourselves ; and, even in the act of penning our sentences about deathbeds, or framing our urgent appeals to the consciences of men, our own consciences may be steeped in lethargy, or gather new hardihood from each repetition of the arguments which have ceased to impress, of the threats and the eloquent denunciations which have ceased to terrify us. It may be a mere exercise in composition, when the intellect and the fancy are all awake, as in other exercises. The faculties of nature may be in animating play, but without one feeling of religious earnestness. It is more than a possible, we fear it may be a frequent thing—that, amid the literalities of ministerial work, the minister himself is cradled into the profoundest spiritual apathy. He is far more pleased with the success of his sermon-making than he is practically moved or affected by the substance of his sermon. He is conversant with the forms of a high and holy calling ; but this may no more carry his thoughts or his affections on high than the skeletons of a churchyard remind the hacknied grave-digger of a coming resurrection or a coming judgment. All this bespeaks the urgent necessity of prayer. Without it, the services of the clergyman may be both strenuous and manifold, yet may still be unconsecrated services. Upon which the certainty is, that he will not save his own soul ; and the likelihood is, that he will not save the souls of those who hear him.

* A separate Lecture was given “ On the Efficacy of Prayer, and an advice founded thereon, of pre-eminent importance in the study of Theology,” which will be found in Dr. Chalmers’ Works, vol. ii. pp. 321-356. The paragraph inserted here formed the close of this Lecture.



PREFATORY NOTICE.

MUCH as Dr. Chalmers prized the benefits of an extemporaneous converse with his students, he did not, in examining them upon the text-book, put such questions only as at the moment suggested themselves; he prepared beforehand a complete series of questions, adding his own answers to those which he regarded as of greatest importance or difficulty, and interjecting among these questions and answers, modifications or corrections or illustrations of his own, which were sometimes brief, and often long and elaborate. All these preparations he entered in manuscript volumes, written in short-hand; upon an inspection of which, it appeared that many of the remarks originally intended for his examinations on Butler and Paley had been transferred *verbatim* to his published volumes on Natural Theology and the Christian Evidences. But although such use had already been made of some of his observations on the Analogy, that work was deemed worthy of further and separate treatment in that series of Lectures upon its different chapters which forms the commencement of the succeeding volume. These Lectures, down to that which embraces the fourth chapter of the Second Part of the Analogy, had been written out, and were left by him ready for publication. The remaining lectures are taken from the short-hand note-book out of which the others had been extended.

I shall elsewhere have occasion to record the signal benefit which at a very early period of his life Dr. Chalmers derived from the perusal of the Analogy. That some of his latest efforts were devoted to a short course of Lectures which should embody his maturest reflections on it, may be regarded as his final tribute to the value of that inestimable

and immortal treatise, which, "carefully and closely packed up out of twenty years' hard thinking;"* has won for itself the character of being "the most original and profound work extant in any language on the philosophy of religion."†

"I have derived," says Dr. Chalmers in the preface to his *Bridge-water Treatise*, "greater aid from the views and reasonings of Bishop Butler than I have been able to find besides in the whole range of our existent authorship." To this acknowledgment of obligation, let us add that of other three distinguished writers. "The course of reading to which he now devoted himself," says the biographer of Dr. M'Crie, "embraced the polemical writings of the most famous divines who flourished during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. From these giants in theology, who have anticipated all the arguments and objections of modern times, he received much of his information on the doctrine regarding the duty of the civil magistrate. Nor did he fail to investigate what may be termed the philosophy of the subject, com-

* *Quarterly Review*, No. lxxxv. This assertion appears to be almost literally correct. Butler was nominated preacher to the Rolls in 1718, and in 1726 he published his *Fifteen Sermons*, telling the reader, in his preface, "that he is not to look for any particular reason for the choice of the greatest part of these discourses; their being taken from amongst others preached in the same place through a course of eight years, being in great measure accidental." We must regard this as virtually an announcement that among the sermons which were retained, there were some as much prized by their author as those which he presented to the public. "The question has therefore often been asked," says Mr. Fitzgerald, "What became of them? It is well known that at his death Butler desired his manuscripts to be destroyed; but we cannot suppose him to have wantonly wished to suppress what he himself judged fit for publication. Perhaps, therefore, the best conjecture we can form may be, that the remaining sermons at the Rolls, (for the future publication of which that sentence in the preface seems designed to prepare,) were afterwards worked into the *Analogy*." This conjecture is strongly supported by our finding that the germ or leading principle of the *Analogy* had already been recognised, as when, in his sixth sermon, Butler says, "that there is a much more exact correspondence between the natural and moral world than we are apt to take notice of." If when arranging his sermons at the Rolls, taking out fifteen from amongst them for present publication, there were others which, on account of their containing the great principles of his future work, Butler carefully reserved, and if he took these sermons with him to the country to be slowly reconstructed and condensed during the long period of his seclusion at Stanhope, the *Analogy*, which was at last given to the world in 1736, might fairly enough be said to have been "carefully and closely packed up" out of at least eighteen years' hard thinking.

† Mackintosh's *Dissertation on the Progress of Ethical Philosophy*.

prising the principles of scriptural interpretation and the analogies between natural and revealed religion, a knowledge of which is essential to a right understanding of the controversy. On this subject he always acknowledged himself peculiarly indebted to Bishop Butler's 'Analogy of Religion, Natural and Revealed,' &c. Alluding many years afterwards in one of his lectures to the advantages of applying the principle of analogy to the interpretation of the Old Testament, he paid the following compliment to that celebrated Treatise :—"It was from this book (nothing the worse of being written by a bishop) that I learned this principle of interpretation, and have been confirmed in many truths of which it does not speak a word, and which probably never entered the mind of the author. It is by it that I have learned to expound the historical books of the Old Testament with some degree of profit, without having recourse to type, allegory, or accommodation. It was by it that I was prevented from becoming an Independent, a Baptist, or an enemy to religious establishments; and by it I learned that I could be friendly to such establishments and to the Protestant constitution of my country, though I never partook of their worldly emoluments—a fact which appears a mystery and a miracle to some wise heads and would-be statesmen."*

"If upon the points of which I treat," says Dr. O'Brien, "I seem to owe anything to any writer who supports the same views, I have no mode of fixing the obligation so as to make as particular acknowledgment of it as I should desire. But I can be quite clear that I owe a deep debt throughout to the illustrious Bishop Butler, and I am ready and anxious to acknowledge that I trace so distinctly to his writings the origin of the soundest and clearest views that I possess upon the nature of the human mind, that I could not write on this or any kindred subject without a consciousness that I was directly or indirectly borrowing largely from him."—Two Sermons on the Human Nature of Christ.

"The author," says Dr. Wayland, "to whom I am under the greatest obligations, is Bishop Butler. The chapter on Conscience is, as I suppose, but little more than a development of his ideas upon the same subject. How much more I owe to this incomparable writer I know not. As it was the study of his Sermons on Human Nature which first turned my attention to this subject, there are doubtless many trains of thought which I have derived from him but which I have

* Life of Dr. McCrie, by his Son, pp. 83, 84.

not been able to trace to their source, as they have long since become incorporated with my own reflections."—*Elements of Moral Science*, by Francis Wayland, D.D.—P. 5. Boston, 1844.

As it would be difficult to name another author who ranks so high and who published so little as Bishop Butler, so it would be difficult to name another to whose writings so many and such weighty approving testimonies have been borne. And if the task could be executed of surveying the works of all who have succeeded him, marking every quarter where silently, and it may be unconsciously, he has been borrowed from, and referring to every author in which any abridgment, expansion, modification, or illustration of one or other of his great and distinguishing arguments are to be found, an unparalleled array of illustrative literature would be gathered round the small inner circle of his writings. Meanwhile, let us present the reader with such a catalogue as we have been able to prepare of those works the direct and declared object of which was to criticise, condense, or popularize the arguments of the "Analogy of Religion, Natural and Revealed, to the Constitution and Course of Nature."

I.—REMARKS ON DR. BUTLER'S SIXTH CHAPTER OF THE ANALOGY OF RELIGION CONCERNING NECESSITY; AND ALSO UPON THE DISSERTATION ON THE NATURE OF VIRTUE. By Philanthropus. —[The Rev. Mr. Bott, Rector of Spicksworth, Norfolk.]—1737.

In his preface this writer remarks, "It is most likely I shall not hereafter publish any more remarks upon this author; and therefore I would take this opportunity of reminding him of a few things in the other parts of his book which, in my humble opinion, greatly deserve to be reviewed and corrected." For the general character of the "Remarks," see Bartlett's "Memoirs of Butler," p. 67.

II.—A SECOND VINDICATION OF MR. LOCKE, WHEREIN HIS SENTIMENTS RELATING TO PERSONAL IDENTITY ARE CLEARED UP FROM SOME MISTAKES OF THE REV. DR. BUTLER. By Vincent Perronet, Vicar of Shoreham, Kent.—1738.

"It is an ingenious and modestly written tract, and there is reason to believe that the later and more popular defender of Mr. Locke against Butler, Bishop Law, was more indebted to the vicar of Shoreham than he chose to acknowledge." —*Fitzgerald's Life of Butler*, p. 45.

III.—SCRIPTURE DOCTRINE OF MAN'S REDEMPTION. By Arthur Ashley Sykes, D.D.—London, 1756.

"This unwearied polemic, whose pen, worn to the stump in the great Bangorian Controversy, was never allowed to rest while its master had a hand to wield it, has animadverted (with some ingenuity as usual) upon Butler's chapter concerning a Mediator in the first, fifth, and sixth sections of his Scripture Doctrine of Redemption."—*Fitzgerald's Life*, p. 46.

IV.—REMARKS ON BUTLER'S ANALOGY. Sixth Edition.—Glasgow, 1764, 12mo.—Canterbury, 1783, 8vo.

This little work consists of a series of short notes, generally commendatory. They do not exhibit much talent, and rarely elucidate the subject. The author is not known.

V.—ESSAYS ON VARIOUS SUBJECTS, MORAL AND CRITICAL; CONTAINING REMARKS ON BUTLER'S ANALOGY, A REVIEW OF LOCKE'S PHILOSOPHY, &c. By William Belcher, Esq., Kent.—London, 1787, 2 vols., 12mo.

"There are writers who bid defiance to all the powers of criticism, some by rising above, and others by sinking below the level of common sense. To one or other of these classes the author of these Essays certainly belongs, but to which it is impossible to determine."—*Monthly Review for October 1787*, quoted in *Bartlett's Memoirs*, p. 69.

VI.—A SERIES OF PAPERS IN THE LOOKER-ON.—London, 1794, 3 vols., 12mo.

The first Number of this work appeared on the 10th March 1792, and the last on the 1st February 1794. It was conducted by William Roberts, author of a *Life of Hannah More*. The papers on Butler consist of a selection and expansion of the leading ideas contained in the successive chapters of the Analogy, designed to exhibit them in a more popular form. No criticism of the Analogy is attempted.

VII.—THE PLEIAD; OR, A SERIES OF ABRIDGMENTS OF SEVEN DISTINGUISHED WRITERS, IN OPPOSITION TO THE PERNICIOUS DOCTRINES OF DEISM. By the Rev. Francis Wrangham.—1820, 8vo.

This work consists of tracts separately printed, and here combined, with a general title. The fifth of these tracts is entitled, "The Principal Parts of Bishop Butler's Analogy of Religion, Natural and Revealed, to the Constitution and Course of Nature, abridged." The Pleiad was republished in Constable's Miscellany, of which it forms vol. xxvi.

VIII.—BUTLER'S ANALOGY ; WITH INTRODUCTORY ESSAY. By the Rev. Daniel Wilson.—Glasgow, 1829, 12mo.

The Bishop of Calcutta's Preliminary Essay is well known and highly appreciated; but to make this a good edition of the "Analogy," to each chapter a table of contents should be prefixed, and an index should be added. There are no notes.

IX.—AN ANALYSIS OF BISHOP BUTLER'S ANALOGY OF RELIGION, NATURAL AND REVEALED, TO THE CONSTITUTION AND COURSE OF NATURE; WITH NOTES. By the Rev. Richard Hobart, A.M., Trinity College, Dublin.—Dublin, 1834, 8vo.

To each chapter is prefixed a short summary of its contents. The notes are few, and consist mostly of references to illustrative passages in other authors. The Analysis is well executed, though capable, with advantage, of condensation. It wants an index. "Examination Questions, grounded on Hobart's Analysis," have been separately published.

X.—THE ANALOGY OF RELIGION, NATURAL AND REVEALED, &c.; WITH A MEMOIR OF THE AUTHOR. By the Rev. George Croly, LL.D.—London, 1834, 8vo.

This forms volume eighth of the "Sacred Classics." The Memoir is very brief and meagre. The volume has neither notes nor index.

XI.—DIGEST OF BISHOP BUTLER'S ANALOGY, IN A COMPENDIUM OF RUDIMENTS OF THEOLOGY. By the Rev. J. B. Smith, B.D., of Christ's Church, Cambridge. For the use of Students.—London, 1836, 12mo.

The argument of each chapter is given in a few prefixed sentences. The digest is ably executed.

XII.—AN ANALYSIS OF BISHOP BUTLER'S ANALOGY, &c. By the Rev. J. P. Wilson, M.A., Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford.—Oxford, 1837, 24mo.

This is merely an analysis for the use of students, preceded by a short preface, but without notes or index.

XIII.—A COMPENDIUM OF BISHOP BUTLER'S ANALOGY, ANNEXED TO MEMOIRS OF HIS LIFE, CHARACTER, AND WRITINGS. By Thomas Bartlett, A.M. London, 1839, 8vo.

Mr. Bartlett's interesting Memoirs have supplied what it is surprising should have been so long wanting—a copious life of his illustrious relative, exhausting all existing sources of information. His Compendium is given in the Bishop's own language.

XIV.—BISHOP BUTLER'S TREATISE ON THE ANALOGY OF RELIGION TO THE CONSTITUTION AND COURSE OF NATURE, (WITH A SUMMARY OF THE ARGUMENT, AND THE STYLE IN SOME PARTS SIMPLIFIED.) By the Rev. Edward Bushby, B.D., Fellow and Tutor of St. John's College, Cambridge.—London, 1840, 8vo.

XV.—ANALYSIS OF BUTLER'S ANALOGY OF RELIGION, NATURAL AND REVEALED, TO THE CONSTITUTION AND COURSE OF NATURE. By the Rev. K. M. Pughe, B.A., of St. John's College, Cambridge.—London, 1842, 16to.

XVI.—AN INDEX TO THE ANALOGY OF BISHOP BUTLER. Prepared by the Rev. Dr. Bentham, Regius Professor of Divinity in the University of Oxford, and adapted to the original editions, and to the later Oxford editions, by Thomas Bartlett, A.M.—London, 1842, 8vo.

XVII.—A SYSTEMATIC ANALYSIS OF BISHOP BUTLER'S TREATISE ON THE ANALOGY OF RELIGION TO THE CONSTITUTION OF NATURE, AS FAR AS RELATES TO NATURAL RELIGION. To which is added, SOME CONSIDERATIONS ON CERTAIN ARGUMENTS THEREIN ADVANCED. By the Rev. Henry Duke, B.A.—London, 1847, 8vo.

This Analysis extends no further than to the end of the first part of the Analogy. It is admirably executed, exhibiting, by its divisions and subdivisions, the main stream and smaller tributaries of the advancing argument. The Appendix is devoted to a minute and most logical dissection and examination of three arguments of the Analogy ; all of which, as it appears to us, Mr. Duke successfully repudiates. It is to be regretted that one so capable should not have completed the work.

XVIII.—A SYSTEMATIC ANALYSIS OF BISHOP BUTLER'S COMPLETE TREATISE ON THE ANALOGY OF RELIGION, &c. By the Rev. John Wilkinson, B.A., of Merton College, Oxford.—Oxford, 1847, 8vo.

"This little volume has no pretensions to originality. Finding that Dr. Mill's Analysis of Bishop Pearson's Exposition of the Creed was useful to my pupils, I have applied his method, with but little alteration, to Bishop Butler's Analogy. The form of the Analysis explains its purpose, which is, by types, by position in the page, and by different subordinate signs, to trace at once the course and the dependence of the argument. * * * I must add, that though my task was completed before the publication of Mr. Duke's Analysis of the first part of the Analogy, I am yet under some obligations to him ; and had Mr. Duke analyzed the complete treatise, the following pages would not have been printed."—*Extracted from Prefatory Notice.*

XIX.—THE ANALOGY OF RELIGION, NATURAL AND REVEALED, &c.;
WITH A LIFE OF THE AUTHOR, COPIOUS NOTES, AND INDEX.
By the Rev. William Fitzgerald, A.M., Prebendary of Donough-
more, and Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of
Dublin.—Dublin, 1849, 8vo.

Although nothing is added to what Mr. Bartlett's diligent and affectionate researches have supplied, yet Mr. Fitzgerald's Life of Butler is so admirably executed, and there are so many illustrations thrown in, indicating a familiar acquaintance with a wide range of literature, that we rejoice that he has prefixed it to the volume. His defence of the Analogy from the exceptions taken against it by Tholuck, is judicious and triumphant. The notes are more those of the scholar than of the metaphysician, though exhibiting a happy blending of both. As an edition of the Analogy, this volume leaves nothing to be desired. Its typography is highly creditable to the Dublin press. The text has been diligently revised, and many errors in the Oxford edition of 1844 have been corrected. A collation of the first edition is subjoined—a literary curiosity, shewing “the singular pains which Butler took in a matter in which he has been commonly censured for carelessness.” Great care has been taken in the preparation of a complete and easily consulted index.

Two Essays on Butler's Analogy, from the pen of the Rev. Albert Barnes, appeared in the numbers for December 1830, and March 1831, of the “Quarterly Christian Spectator.” These, somewhat amplified, are prefixed to an issue of the Analogy from the New York press, which has already reached to the 18th edition. In the “Gospel Advocate” for 1823, published at Boston, there is a paper on the obscurity of Butler's style, accompanied by a few pages of the first chapter, translated into what is presented as intelligible and readable English. The tenth volume of the “American Biblical Repository” contains an article on the writings of Butler.

LECTURES ON BUTLER'S ANALOGY.



LECTURES

ON

BUTLER'S ANALOGY.

INTRODUCTION.

THE PRAYER.

THOU art, O God, the high and the holy One, who inhabitest eternity, and the praises thereof. Do Thou impress us aright with a sense of Thy greatness as contrasted with the littleness and the limitation of all our faculties; and do Thou impress us aright with a sense of Thy sacredness as contrasted with the exceeding sinfulness of our nature. May we be clad with humility. In studying the lessons of Thy word may we evince all the duteousness and docility of children. May we sit at the feet of Him who is meek and lowly in heart; and seeking at His mouth the revelations of Thy blessed will, may ours be the blessed privilege of those who hear, and believe, and obey.

1. THE work of Butler on the Analogy of Religion—Natural and Revealed—to the Constitution and Course of Nature, is one of the best cures for infidelity I know, and one of the best preservatives against it. Or rather, instead of a remedy for unbelief, it may be termed a most effectual remedy against disbelief; for there is a most weighty and important difference between these two things. One might have no positive reason for affirming the truth of a given doctrine, in which case it is

the proper object of unbelief; but he might have as little positive reason for affirming its falsehood, in which case it cannot be the object of disbelief. There is many an imaginable object in Nature, of which we cannot say that it positively is, but of which we can as little say that it positively is not. Were we to assign for such objects a place in the mind, we should say that they lie neither in the region of belief nor in the region of disbelief, but along an intermediate line betwixt these two, as being the objects of neither the one nor the other, but simply of unbelief. For an example of this, we can allege it as a conceivable thing, that there rolls a planet in our system between Mercury and Venus, but still invisible to us, because too small for the observation of our most powerful telescopes. Who can affirm this in the absence of all substantive proof? yet who, it may still more emphatically be said, who can deny it? We cannot say that such a planet is; and still less can we say that it is not. But at the very least we can say, that for aught we know it may be. We have not yet discovered it in the region of the actuals; but neither have we so thoroughly explored that region as to qualify us for affirming that it is not there. Its true place or category is in the region of the possibles—its right logical position being the midway, or ambiguous state of pure scepticism.

2. We cannot yet say of any intermediate planet between Mercury and Venus, that it is; but it is not without design that we have employed the words, that *still less* can we say that it is not. The time may yet come, when, on the strength of one simple observation by a competent instrument directed to its place of little room in the heavens, we shall be enabled to descry such a body, and so to make positive affirmation of its real and substantive existence. But we do not see how we shall ever be enabled to make positive affirmation of its non-existence. For the assertion that it is, we may have but to allege the definite finding of some one astronomer, and which, with our knowledge of its path and quarter in the firmament, we can repeat at any time; but for the sweeping assertion that it is not, we should have to make a sweeping survey and explora-

tion of that mighty annular space amounting to millions and millions more of square miles which lies between the orbits of these two planets, and to report that throughout the whole of this vast extent, a moving body so small as to have escaped all our former methods of discovery, is nowhere to be found. Such often is the momentous difference between the establishment of a proof and the establishment of a disproof. It might require but one finding to ascertain of a given thing that it exists somewhere; but it might require an infinity of findings, and that too in places to us inaccessible, to ascertain that it exists nowhere. And if there be one department of truth where this principle is of surest and most obvious application, it is when brought to bear on the things of faith and eternity. One would need to compass the outskirts of immensity, and to have traversed all within them, ere he could pronounce a negative on these things. By one single manifestation might God make Himself authentically known to us; but for us positively to state that there is no God, no Jesus Christ, no angels, or that there has been no creation and will be no day of judgment—this implies a mastery on our part over all space and all time. In the things of religion belief must have its own proper and precise ground to rest upon, else it is presumption. In the absence of any such ground there is no presumption, but the contrary, in unbelief. There is a disbelief, again, the presumption of which is tremendous—a usurpation of Omniscience.

3. Yet there is a warrantable disbelief even in the matters of religion. If I have valid evidence for a certain proposition, and believe it accordingly, then am I not only an unbeliever, but a disbeliever in its opposite. If I have direct observation that the wind is blowing from the north, I must be a disbeliever in the proposition that it is blowing from the south, and also a disbeliever in the truth of him who tells me so. If I have reason to know that God cannot lie, then will I not only be an unbeliever, but a disbeliever, in the professed revelation which tells me that He does lie. I must be a disbeliever in all which is specifically the opposite of that which I do believe; and if such belief be well grounded, then such disbelief must

be equally well grounded. I cannot believe that the wind now blows from the north, without disbelieving that the wind now blows from the south—which is another proposition altogether than that the wind never blows from the south. A disbelief in the singular or specific proposition, that the wind now blows from the south, might be perfectly warrantable; while disbelief in the universal proposition that the wind ever blows from the south, would be monstrously presumptuous and unwarrantable, because it were disbelief not as before, in a specific or singular, but in a universal negative. It is true that the proposition, God cannot lie, may be held as a universal negative.

4. There is more or less of this presumption in all the enemies of our faith. For example, we should deem it immensely arrogant in the creatures of a day, to pronounce of the unseen and everlasting God—that He never does or can act in a particular way, that He never has adopted, and never would adopt such or such a method of administration. Ere one can be warranted in speaking or in thinking thus, he would need both to have observed and studied the Divine government in all the vastness of its extent, and throughout all the endless variety of its manifold and multiform processes; and yet it is on such an implied acquaintance with the infinite and the everlasting, that a great part of our infidelity is based. As an instance of this, it is alleged, and with all confidence, by adversaries of the Christian religion, that God would never make the innocent suffer for the guilty; and, therefore, because this procedure is ascribed to Him in the Bible, they would charge upon that book a false representation of the Deity, and so deny it to be a genuine communication from heaven to earth.

5. There are two ways of meeting this objection. The first is by taking account of the actual and positive credentials which might be alleged on the side of this professed revelation as being a message from God—its miracles, supported by the best and amplest of human testimony—its prophecies, substantiated by the history both of the anterior writings and their posterior fulfilments—its many discernible signatures of goodness and sacredness and truth, as palpably standing forth in

the pages of this record—its minute and marvellous consistencies both with itself and with contemporaneous authors, such as no impostor could ever have maintained ;—above all, its felt adaptations to the wants and fears and longings of the human spirit, and the sense and perception of which are often given in answer to prayer, so as to constitute the evidence to an inquirer of a most distinct and satisfying revelation to himself. These are what form the great bulk and body of the Christian evidences ; and what distinguishes them from such of the objections of Deism as have now been specified, is, that they are founded not on what we conceive of the ways of God, but on what we observe and can verify of the ways of man, or on what the characteristics of truth and falsehood are in human witnesses, human histories, and human experience. In other words, the arguments for our Bible revelation are grounded on the certainties of a familiar and oft explored territory—these arguments against it are so many imaginations fetched from the obscurities of a distant unknown. It is competent for us to sit in judgment on the conduct of our fellow-men ; and this judgment, whether it have respect to its first teachers as in estimating the historical evidence, or to its present disciples as in estimating the experimental evidence, is all on the side of Christianity. It is not competent for us to sit in judgment on the counsels of the unsearchable God ; yet this judgment of arcana beyond our reach, and waywardly expatiating over a region that is purely conjectural, is all which can be plausibly alleged in opposition to Christianity. We feel at no loss for a decision as to which of these two should countervail, or rather overmatch the other. We have as great a preference for the first over the second, as we have for the findings of the Baconian philosophy over the fancies and reveries of the old schoolmen. Such is our general argument in favour of Christianity ; and for the purpose of repelling objections of the character that has now been specified, we require no other.

6. Yet there is another way of meeting these objections ; and it is Butler's way of it. With us it is enough that they are objections not competent to be made by a creature of such

limited faculties, and with so narrow a sphere of observation as man. We hold that it is not for him to say that God never would do this one or that other thing alleged of Him in Scripture, and that therefore Scripture is not of God. Our reply is, that we cannot tell; and on the strength of this *argumentum ab ignorantia*, we regard such gratuitous and unauthorized assertions on the part of the infidel as of no possible avail against the host of positive evidences which attest the truth of Christianity. Such is our reply, but it is not Butler's. He meets the adversary who says that God never would do this one or that other thing ascribed to Him in the Bible, by showing that these very things He has actually done; or that what is excepted against in Scripture, is exemplified in nature and experience. Or to put it otherwise, what is said of God in the Word, and because of which the infidel rejects it as being His word, is done by Him in His works, and which yet the infidel continues to regard as His works. We should have been satisfied to dispose of the adversary's objection on the ground of his ignorance; but Butler advances a step further, and convicts him of inconsistency.

7. It were well to estimate the precise argumentative force of his peculiar reasoning. Its main office we hold, then, is to repel objections against Christianity, not to supply or establish any substantive evidence in its favour. Take, for an example, the observation of Origen as given by Butler in the Introduction to his work. It is to the effect, that "he who believes the Scripture to have proceeded from Him who is the author of nature, may well expect to find the same sort of difficulties in it as are found in the constitution of nature." Now, surely it will not be insisted on as a proof for the Divine origin of Scripture, that it contains difficulties, for innumerable are the books teeming with these which have been framed by human hands. Yet though these difficulties in Scripture may form no proof of its divinity, the allegation of like difficulties in nature forms a most complete and conclusive reply to the objection of the Deist against Scripture because of its difficulties. For, as Butler says, in following up the observation of Origen, "he who denies the Scripture to

have been from God upon account of these difficulties, may, for the very same reason, deny the world to have been formed by Him." In how far such analogies may afford a presumption, that both Scripture and nature, or both the word and the world, have the same author, we shall not inquire; but they are perfectly decisive in the words of Bishop Butler, "at least so far as to answer objections against the former's being from God, drawn from anything which is analogical or similar to what is in the latter, which is acknowledged to be from Him." To repel objections, in fact, is the great service which this analogy has rendered to the cause of Revelation, and it is the only service which we seek for at its hands.

8. It appears to us, then, that they overrate the power of analogy, who look to it for any very distinct or positive contribution to the Christian argument. There are passages in his work where Butler ascribes this virtue, this augmentative power to it, by which an addition is made to the evidence for revelation—which addition, however, it were extremely difficult to state or to estimate; insomuch, that in our controversy with infidels, we should willingly forego all claim to any *positive* accession from this quarter of strength to our cause. When giving in our reasons for the truth and divinity of the Bible, we should speak of the evidence from miracles, and the evidence from prophecy, and the evidence from the morality of Scripture, and the evidence from those marks of sincerity and sacredness which abound in it, and the evidence of its numerous adaptations to the wants and the weaknesses of sinful humanity; but we should scarcely, by way of increment, and so as to make out a larger summation, adduce the evidence from analogy. And yet we hold it, notwithstanding, to be a most powerful and efficient auxiliary in this warfare, though its office is mainly, if not altogether, a defensive one; for, although it should supply no proof, it may confer a mighty benefit on our cause by repelling all disproof. It may in itself yield no positive evidence, and yet be of most important service, by clearing away from all the evidence which is positive, the burden of any drawback or deduction that might otherwise lie upon it. It might

form no part or ingredient of the probation, and yet remove a bar in the way of the probation. A given proposition might be regarded as liable to one or other of three verdicts—proven, not proven, or disproven. Though analogy should furnish no materials on which to construct a plea for the highest of these verdicts, it may nevertheless be of perfect avail for raising up the proposition in question from the lowest of these verdicts to the middle one—for raising it from the state of disproven to at least the state of not proven, and so placing it in what may be termed the midway and neutral state of indifferency or pure scepticism. This is the distinct and definite, and withal most valuable service to which analogy, we think, is fully competent, and which service, we further think, Butler hath overtaken and finished. He has raised our question from the depth and the discredit to which infidels would have sunk it—far beneath zero, in the scale of evidence. He has at least brought it up to zero ; and this is doing an immense deal, even though analogy should utterly fail to place it by ever so little above this, and all further elevations can only be looked for from other quarters of reasoning and contemplation. After that analogy hath done its own proper work, that is, cleared away a whole host of objections, or in other words, left nothing to be neutralized or counteracted, then every new item of evidence tells affirmatively, and is a clear make-weight on the side of the Christian argument. The sceptic, who says that there is no reason for believing in Christianity, tells us a different thing from the still more daring adversary who says that there are many reasons for disbelieving it. It is with the latter of these two combatants that analogy has properly to do. It does not meet the demand of the first with reasons in proof of Christianity, but it holds parley with the second, and thoroughly disposes of his reasons against it. Let it not be imagined that this is a mean or inconsiderable benefit to the Christian argument. Even though it should not supply one atom of evidence for the verdict of credible, it does much, and what is most important, if it fully establish the verdict of not incredible. In algebra a larger summation might be had in two ways, either by placing

in the column to be added up some more affirmative quantities, or by the removal therefrom of its negative quantities. It might be questioned whether Butler has done much, or even anything, in the one way of it ; but he has unquestionably done much in the other. Though he may not have contributed a single positive reason himself on the side of Christianity, he is a most valuable auxiliary notwithstanding, if he have cleared away those objections, on the neutralizing of which a great part of the force of the positive reasoning may have been otherwise expended. It is thus, that though he should not have added one stone to the superstructure, it may, in virtue of the labour of his hands, have not only become a firmer, but a statelier and loftier superstructure than before.

9. His argument is not addressed to Atheists. It presupposes a God, but without assuming for Him all those attributes which even Natural Theology would affix to His character. All which it claims at the outset for this great and mysterious Being, is intelligence and power. It views Him as a natural, and thence proceeds to regard Him as a moral Governor also. Not that it proves this latter doctrine, but repels the objections against it—its proper office being not to establish, but to vindicate. Butler, in the first part of this Treatise, has accomplished this service for the religion of Nature ; and in its second part accomplishes the like service for the religion of the Bible.

SECTION I.

THE USE WHICH BUTLER MAKES OF THE ANALOGICAL
ARGUMENT IN NATURAL THEOLOGY.

PART I.

CHAPTER I.—OF A FUTURE LIFE.

THE PRAYER.

THOU, O God, hast brought life and immortality to light by the gospel. We rejoice that whatever the doubts or whatever the darkness of nature may be on the question of our eternity, there is ample manifestation afforded to us in Scripture both of the endless bliss which is reserved in heaven for the faithful, and of the way that leads to it. We would bless Thy name for the information which Thou hast given both of the duties and the destinies of man; and it is our prayer, that whenever beset with perplexities of our own, we may take refuge in Him who alone hath the words of eternal life.

1. THIS chapter, which treats of a future life, we hold to be the least satisfactory in the work; this, however, not because the subject of it is beyond the reach of analogy, but because it is so much infected by the obscure metaphysics which obtained in England at the commencement of the last century, which even the reasonings of Clarke have not been able to sustain; and which, when disjoined from his talent, as in the pages of Wollaston, and throughout the greater part of the Boyle lectureship, betrays the same sort of mysticism, the same want of clearness and conclusiveness, as do the scholastic subtleties of

the Middle Ages. We allude more particularly to what Butler says of the indivisibility of consciousness, and to the confident inference that he would found thereupon as to the simple and so indestructible nature of the agent in which this uncompounded faculty resides*—reminding us of certain argumentations which are still to be heard on the immateriality, as a ground for believing in the immortality of the human soul. And neither can we admit with him that because we have no positive reason for believing death to be the destruction of the living agent, there is the same ground for believing him to be still alive that there is for our natural faith in the continuance of any thing. If this consideration hold true, then instead of its yielding but a dim or slender probability, it presents us with an absolute demonstration. Not as if Butler thought of analogy that it constitutes this argument; but he evidently thinks that it hands us over to it. We think that it hands us over to sounder and better arguments than this; while of itself it should claim no higher than the negative power which we have contended for—the power of placing the question of our soul's immortality in that negative and neutral position where it is freed of all the presumptions against it, but where the presumptions for it have yet to be sought for from other quarters; or in other words, where, though no longer a disproved, it still remains an unproved thing. It is not enough to say that the entire self survives the loss of a limb. The conclusion is, that therefore it *may* survive the loss or separation of the whole body—very different truly from the conclusion which is more than hinted at in this chapter, that the soul *must* so survive it. In all instances which are alleged here of mutilation or destruction, we have the remaining sensible proof for the continuance of the living powers. In the grand or final destruction of the whole body, we have no such proof; and this must be supplied from another source than from the analogy itself,

* [Butler's argument is minutely analyzed, and its fallacy very fully exposed, in Duke's "Systematic Analysis" of the Analogy.—Appendix I. See also Whately's Essays on some of the peculiarities of the Christian Religion, p. 63.—W. H.]

which has demonstrated but the *posse*, and not the *esse* of the soul's immortality. It has not supplied the proof, but only removed every bar in the way of it. It has not, at least to any sensible or calculable extent, mounted the question upward on the scale of evidence ; but it has done a great deal, if, raising it from lower depths, it shall have placed it at the bottom of the scale. For any further ascent above this, it must stand indebted to other and positive considerations—such as the powers and aspirations of the mind, and its capacity for indefinitely higher enjoyments than any it meets with in this world ; but most of all the moral argument, or that grounded on the conscience of man, and which points to a coming judgment and coming immortality for a righteous settlement of all these innumerable questions of constant occurrence in our present state, whether of unavenged sin against God, or of unredressed injustice between man and man, which, if left without equitable adjustment in a future state, would cause that our world should be not only a deep moral enigma never to be solved, but a scene of perfect moral anarchy and confusion never either to be reformed or reckoned with.

2. And yet the analogies of this chapter serve all the purposes of that argument which legitimately and properly belongs to them. Let but the metaphysical reasoning for the indivisibility of consciousness, and so for the continuance of the human soul, on which it is here attempted to build up a positive consideration in favour of the doctrine of immortality—let these be discarded. Let it further be held as the main function of analogy not to supply the proofs, but to repel the disproofs : and then nothing can be imagined more effective and more beautiful than the illustrations of this otherwise least interesting and least successful of all Butler's demonstrations. The transmutations which take place in the state of other animals, as birds and insects, and yet with the subsistence of the living principle in each of the stages ; and most of all, the mutilations which the human body undergoes, and yet without the destruction of the living powers—these all abundantly warrant the conclusion, not that the soul must, but that the soul may sur-

vive the entire dissolution of that material framework where-with it is now encompassed. They make the doctrine *probable* in the sense that they make it provable; or in other words, that they lay it clear and open for being proved, which is truly a different thing from the positive work of proving it, whether in part or in whole. These analogies have achieved a useful service, if they have brought up the doctrine to that point of neutrality at which any further evidence, however small, may affirmatively tell upon it, and that on evidence contributed from other quarters than from analogy itself.

3. In this view of it we feel relieved from all the difficulty which attaches to the consideration, that, as far as there is positive weight in these reasonings of Butler, they serve to establish not the immortality of men only, but also of the inferior animals. And so they would if they could lay claim to a weight that is positive. The vital principle in a beast survives the loss of a limb in as great vigour and entireness as that of a man does—nay, many are the inferior creatures whose life remains in them after far severer mutilations, or more frightful dislocation and derangement of the parts than man could undergo, and yet continue alive. Nay, if the worshippers of this argument will persist in ascribing to it an affirmative value, they might proceed on the strength of it to demonstrate the immortality of the vegetable life in plants as well as of the animal life in man, and throughout all the species beneath him; for there are kinds of wood which might be specified, and where the vegetative power has been known to survive all the processes of the wright-shop—inasmuch that after having been subjected to the treatment of the saw and the plane, and the hatchet, and then inserted as a stake or piece of paling in the ground, it has actually broken out into foliage, and thus given evidence that the vital or vegetative principle of growth has been so far indestructible. It were a somewhat extravagant conclusion from such phenomena, that plants, or rather that what constituted the vitality of plants, must be an indestructible or an undying principle. It is an extravagance, however, not at all chargeable on those who do

not seek to found on the analogical argument so much as one atom of affirmative probability for the immortality either of men, or animals, or vegetables, but willingly at the same time concede to analogy the power of raising all the three from depths which are beneath to the same dead level of the perfectly neutral and unknown—thus warranting the like assertion in regard to each class of these organic creatures, or rather of the life which is within them, not that it must, but that for aught we know it may be immortal. This is the whole length to which we should carry the inference from analogy, with the full conviction at the same time of high probabilities for the immortality of man, founded, however, not on that which is common to him with the others, but on that which is peculiar and which signalizes him from or above the others—as the conscience which is his exclusively, and those indefinite powers and aspirations which are his exclusively. The analogical argument places all these three, then, on the same level in regard to the possibility of their being immortal. The probabilities, however, of this high destination can only be claimed by man. We should hold it the most unphilosophical temerity to affirm so much as the slightest atom of evidence for the immortality either of beasts or of plants, and that notwithstanding the kindred phenomena which they exhibit to those of the human framework. Yet we deem it to be neither temerity nor extravagance, but in the very spirit of the true philosophic modesty, to affirm on the strength of those phenomena, that for aught we know they may be immortal—the affirmation this not of a positive knowledge, but of conscious ignorance.

4. And in like manner we do not see that there is a positive incompatibility between the doctrine of the soul's immortality and the system of Atheism. In our estimation it would then rank among the propositions of the *terra incognita*. We could allege no reason for the denial, but most assuredly as little for the assertion of this immortality. It is the doctrine of a God, and that alone, which yields for the doctrine of man's immortality all the positive evidence that it can rightfully pretend to. It is because we think that God will not leave either the vices

or the virtues of men without such a reckoning and such a recompense as are far from being fully realized in this world ; and it is because we think that He would not have endowed man with such boundless conceptions and desires, and such expansive faculties, unless He meant to provide him with a larger and more enduring theatre in which he might expatiate. It is on these considerations, each of them presupposing a God, that we reason onward to the conclusion of a future state of existence, both for repairing the inequalities and supplementing the deficiencies of the present.

CHAPTER II.

OF THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD BY REWARDS AND PUNISHMENTS,
AND PARTICULARLY OF THE LATTER.

THE PRAYER.

THOU, O God, art unchangeable, and there is a steadfastness of principle which reigns throughout all Thine administration. Thou canst not look upon evil with complacency ; neither can sin be dealt with under Thy holy and inflexible government without a ransom or without an expiation. May we count it no light matter that we have broken the law of God, and that the first and greatest of its commandments, even the supreme love of Himself, has been hourly and habitually violated. May we therefore feel our need of a Saviour and our need of a Sanctifier, and submit ourselves to the authority of that message which came to our world charged with the overtures of a world's reconciliation.

5. Though we should not hold the analogies of this chapter to be even presumptive reasons for a future state of rewards and punishments, they are all sufficient for repelling the objections against it. They might supply no grounds of evidence, yet effectually cut away all grounds of opposition. Should it be alleged from the benevolence of God that He would not only confer happiness on His family below, but absolutely secure it

so as to place it beyond the reach of accident and hazard—and more especially that He would not make this happiness dependent on aught so precarious as the conduct of creatures so frail and capricious as we—this is conclusively met by the facts and observations of what is going on around us. Let us devise what explanations we may for the rationale of such a procedure, it is the actual procedure of the Almighty in His government of our present world. Both the happiness and misery of man are in many instances placed at his own disposal and in his own power; and it is quite of a piece with this, that his state, whether of enjoyment or of wretchedness in the life that is to come, should be the result of his character and doings in the life that now is. Man often knows beforehand that such a good or such an evil will be the consequence of his present actions—so that if apprized of a state of existence beyond death, where he will be happy or miserable according to the life which he leads in this world, there is nothing to object against such a regimen which might not be objected against the regimen of which, in our present state, we have countless exemplifications. This consideration may not afford a sufficient basis on which to affirm the doctrine of future rewards and punishments, but it is complete as a defence against the infidelity which would deny them.

6. Such an economy, then—that is, of actions followed up by foreseen pleasures and pains, and which are therefore fitted to induce one line of conduct and deter from another—is, to all intents and purposes, a government, making it not unlikely that there may be a similar though a more extended government, and by which, consequent on our actions here, there are rewards or punishments hereafter. We do not say that the one which is seen makes the other which is still unseen positively credible. But the analogy between them warrants, at least, the more limited and juster inference of its being “not incredible;” or, in Butler’s own language—“The whole present course of things most fully shews that there is nothing incredible in the general doctrine of religion as far as the notion of rewarding and punishing is concerned.”

7. And as they are the punishments rather than the rewards which are more liable to be excepted against, he points out certain striking analogies between the actual punishments of this life and the alleged punishments of another, which, whether they have in them any of the virtue of proofs or not, are at least of full effect in clearing away a whole host of objections. For example, the actions which are thus visited are generally committed for the sake of a present tempting gratification, as when intemperance is followed up by disease: and these eventual pains or chastisements are often far greater than the immediate enjoyment, as when the disgrace of a whole lifetime results from the indulgence, which lasts but for a moment, of some ungovernable passion; and frequently a long delay intervenes between the commission and its penalty, as when the secret fraud or profligacy, it may be of many years back, at length breaks out, to the consequent ruin of the perpetrator either in character or circumstances; and when these natural punishments do come, it is often with an astounding suddenness, and when they are altogether unlooked for; and the sufferers may have very far from a clear evidence or expectation beforehand of what is to follow; and yet their want of this clear and confident anticipation, nay the delusive hope, perhaps even the probability that after all they may escape the calamity in question, might not prevent the sure and sore fulfilment of it. In these various ways and with these various accompaniments, may the imprudence, or, as is often thought, the natural and excusable heedlessness of one stage of life, be followed up by the irretrievable want or wretchedness of its future stages—so as to realize in living and actual experience, the very things which are most readily seized upon by infidels, and protested against as the intolerable severities of the religious system. The paragraph of this chapter where the enumeration of these resemblances is given, presents us with one of the finest triumphs of the analogical argument, and in which its power as a weapon of defence appears to great advantage—cutting down, as with a scythe, a whole army of those objections which are most frequent in the mouths of adversaries,

being not only the most plausible in themselves, but the most formidable in point of effect, from a certain tone of generous denunciation against all arbitrary and tyrannic rule in which they are propounded, and so as to associate the semblance of a protesting and moral indignancy with the infidel cause.

8. They who say to themselves, Peace, when there is no peace, and cherish a delusive security, as if in the hands of an indulgent God who will not bear too hard upon them, but make allowance for the frailty of nature and the force of external temptations—such as these would do well to ponder the reasonings of this chapter. If they do not make out a positive demonstration on the side of religion, they at least make out the decisive overthrow of aught like a positive demonstration on the side of Atheism. They do not of themselves constitute the argument by which to uphold the systems either of Natural Theology or of the Christian Revelation; but they level to the ground many of the strongest and likeliest defences which the enemies of religion have to rear in opposition to the argument.

9. In the third paragraph of this chapter, Butler makes a fine display of true philosophic modesty. He undertakes no absolute defence of God's administration, but proposes a series of conjectures, which, like the queries of Sir Isaac Newton, express rather the confessions of ignorance than any disposition to press into mysteries which are yet unknown to us. The object of his treatise, in fact, does not require that there shall be any positive solution of existing appearances; for he is not holding parley with Atheists, but supposes his adversary in the argument to believe a God, and of course to acquiesce in all that is, as consistent with the plans of His wisdom and the perfections of His moral character. So that all which he undertakes to shew is, that the things excepted against in any given doctrine of theology, are the very things which may also be detected in the actual phenomena of nature or of providence. This may not furnish any valid proof on his own side of the question, but at least enables him to do away what might otherwise have stood as a valid objection on the other side of the question. Our antagonists can no longer persist in urging

against the schemes either of natural or revealed theology what they find to be revealed in that part of the Divine scheme which is before their eyes. Analogy may have done nothing yet to substantiate either natural or revealed theology. It may yet have supplied no proof, but it has done much if it have cleared away all disproof, and so left both theologies in a free state for being advantaged by all the appropriate evidences which might be brought forward to sustain them.

CHAPTER III.

OF THE MORAL GOVERNMENT OF GOD.

THE PRAYER.

THOU sittest, O God, on a throne of judgment, whence Thine eyes do behold and Thine eyelids do try the children of men. Give us to feel the control of Thine omniscient eye; and on comparing the sacredness of Thy character with the sinfulness of ours, may we be visited with a sense of guilt and of danger, and gladly betake ourselves to the refuge set before us in the gospel. May we at length be constrained to yield a thankful acquiescence in the overtures of the New Testament, that with Jesus Christ as the Lord our righteousness and the Lord our strength, we may walk before Thee without fear, yet walk before Thee in holy and new obedience all the days of our lives.

10. The subject of the present chapter is as distinct from that of the former, as the generic idea of a government is distinct from the more particular idea of it as possessed of a certain character, or as being of a certain kind and species. If certain actions are followed up by pleasure and others by pain, and these are known beforehand, so that the agent can foresee the consequences of his doings, even as he would have done if under a proclaimed law, which told at the same time of its own rewards and its own penalties—these are enough of themselves to constitute a government having its regulations which are

known, and its sanctions which are executed. So much for government in the general; but should it be found among these general phenomena, that those actions which are righteous were followed up by pleasure, and those actions which are wicked were followed up by pain—this would present us with a moral government enveloped, as it were, in the general and natural; and it is to the manifestations of such a government in the course and constitution of nature that the author now addresses his observations.

11. As in the former chapter, so here too, he discovers the same cautious reverence for things unknown, and more especially when they relate to the character and ways of God, of whom he had already said that we are apt to make greatly too free in our speculations. He obviously lays discountenance on that theory which would represent benevolence as the alone attribute of the Godhead, and that all the other attributes are but phases or modifications of this—an imagination which has given rise to much of our meagre and much of our heretical theology. But without stopping to consider this dogma, and without pronouncing either for or against it, he rightly holds it enough for his argument, that God does manifest Himself in this world as a righteous governor, a master over servants, as well as the parent of a family; and that therefore he may so manifest Himself in the world which is to come. But it is to be observed, that the considerations in which he here deals are such as not merely serve to annul objections, but to make out a substantive proof in favour of his doctrine; and therefore we venture to affirm, that every intelligent reader will feel as if in this part of his work he had firmer hold of a positive argument than generally throughout the volume. The explanation of this seems to be, that the things which are here alleged of present observation warrant a much larger conclusion than that, as they take place in this world, so they *may* take place in the next—a conclusion sufficient of itself to neutralize all reasons of disbelief. But the truth is, they are such things as make out the strong probability of God being a moral Governor here, and hence the probability, alike strong, that He will not re-

nounce this character in another state, but sustain there the part of a moral Governor also. It is on the footing of this intermediate term in the reasoning that the argument gathers into a strength and an affirmative value beyond what we are sensible of in the other departments of this treatise. Everywhere do the analogies quoted by our author fulfil their own definite and appropriate function, which is to repel objections. But here, and for the reason, we apprehend, which has now been proposed, they seem to shoot ahead of all the others ; and, supplying weighty proofs rather than slender presumptions, to perform a higher service than we generally seek or look for at their hands.

12. The express purpose indeed of this chapter is to prove in how far a moral government has been already and actually established, and so as to found on its present appearances and first beginnings here, the anticipation of its larger developments hereafter. In the prosecution of this task, he takes full advantage of all the existing phenomena that bear upon the question—as our own natural sense of justice ; the undoubted consequences of prudence and imprudence—these rewards and punishments either of a propriety on the one hand, or of its violation on the other ; the chastisements which fall on vice, as being hurtful to society ; the natural pleasures of virtue and pains of vice, as such and in themselves apart from their effects either of good or evil to the commonwealth ; the regard so far borne to virtue by men, and the detestation so far of its opposite, that the former is on the whole followed up by the esteem of society, and the latter by its contempt and disapproval. These all serve to indicate a moral government, being so many specimens before our eyes of the manner in which He deals with the righteous and the wicked respectively, and so as to reward the one by certain present advantages and pleasures, and to punish the other by certain present damages and discomforts, both inwardly and outwardly. It is true that there are certain cross or adverse phenomena which seem to make against this argument, but which, in the hands of our author, and by the help of his sound discrimination, are most effec-

tually disposed of. As when it is said that there is pleasure in the indulgence of certain vicious passions—as indeed there must be in every indulgence; and our author replies that this is owing to the passion itself, and not to what is vicious in it; for while the passion must necessarily by its gratification yield pleasure, the vice that is in it may notwithstanding and simply as vice, yield pain, being followed up by self-dissatisfaction from within and disgrace from without. There is another wise and important distinction made by him, and by which he gets quit of many apparent exceptions to the rule for which he argues of a moral government in this life. These are the instances of vicious actions being sometimes rewarded, yet never, he well replies, *because* they are vicious, but *though* they are vicious; and again, virtuous actions are sometimes punished, yet never as virtuous, or never because virtuous, but *though* virtuous. It is thus that all contradictory appearances are put out of the way; but it is when reasoning on the tendencies of things, and on what the full and final result would be, if either a universal virtue or universal vice was to prevail in the world, that the advocates for its being under a moral regimen are placed on their highest vantage-ground. In the chapter before us, Butler takes the full benefit of this consideration, and shows most effectively, that in like manner, as by dint of the innate tendency and force of reason men have the superiority over brutes, notwithstanding the greater strength in many instances of the latter—so by dint of the same innate tendency and force in virtue, the righteous of our species will come in fair circumstance, that is in a state of union and mutual understanding, to bear the rule or maintain the just and wholesome ascendant over general society. Now these considerations have in them a great weight of positive argument on the side of a moral government, and so of a moral Governor; insomuch that though our attention at the time were not at all directed to the future, but confined to present appearances, we should thence alone infer a strong probability for a reigning and righteous God. But when once we have attained to this, we come into possession of a strong affirmative evidence, the strongest

within the reach of unassisted nature, for virtue being rewarded and vice being punished in another world, and hence perhaps the reason why in this passage of the Demonstration, there seems a greater ascent above the level of mere neutrality, or but the power of countervailing objections, than in any other part of the Treatise. And yet the author himself recognises, and nowhere more than in this portion of his work, a distinctness between the proper arguments for religion, and his own argument from analogy, the peculiar and chief function of which is not to supply the proofs for, but to repel the disproofs against it. He tells us that "suppositions are not to be looked on as true, because not incredible." Now it is for the other argument to satisfy us that religion is true, and more strictly for the analogical to satisfy us that it is not incredible. And again, he admits that "it is not the purpose of this chapter, nor of this Treatise, properly to prove God's perfect moral government over the world, or the truth of religion, but to observe what there is in the constitution and course of nature to confirm the proper proof of it, supposed to be known;"—though the office of analogy, in our estimation, is not so much to confirm as to defend. Our inestimable author expresses very nearly the same notion, when he speaks of the proof of a future state of retribution resting upon the usual known arguments for it, which he thinks plainly unanswerable, and would be so, though there were no additional confirmation of them from the things above insisted on. It is true, he adds, "but these things are a very strong confirmation of them;" and yet he distinguishes these from what he calls "the proper proof of religion," and acknowledges of his own special argument, that while it gives just ground to hope and to fear that virtue and vice *may be* rewarded and punished in a higher degree hereafter—this alone is not sufficient ground to think that they *actually will be* so rewarded and punished. We should hold it enough to claim for analogy the power of demonstrating that religion may be true—leaving it to the other arguments to prove that it actually is true. But it is comfortable to think, that, however different the impressions may be of its precise

argumentative amount and value, it, at least to the former of these two achievements, or the demonstration of what *may be*, is fully and altogether competent.

CHAPTER IV.

OF A STATE OF PROBATION, AS IMPLYING TRIAL, DIFFICULTIES,
AND DANGER.

THE PRAYER.

THOU art throned in mystery, O God. It is but a part of Thy ways that we are admitted to behold; but the whole extent of Thy wondrous plan, and the processes, whether of creation or of providence, who can comprehend! Give us to wait with patience those further evolutions, in virtue of which what we see not now we shall see afterwards; and meanwhile let us cultivate that blessed charity whereof Thou hast said that it is greater than all faith and than all knowledge. We feel assured, that though clouds and darkness are round about Thee, there is wisdom in all Thy ways, there is kindness in all Thy visitations.

13. It might be, and often is, indeed, made an objection to the religious system, that our way to the everlasting blessedness which it proposes should be beset with so many lures which tempt us aside from the prosecution of it; and, on the other hand, that so many hardships and difficulties should be attendant on our steadfast perseverance in that way. The thing complained of is that our great and ultimate good should have been made of such difficult attainment—insomuch that the frail powers of humanity, either for the achievement of what is good or the resistance of what is evil, are so greatly overtaken, as in the great majority of instances to be overborne. Why, it may be asked, is the realization of our true and eternal happiness made so very operose as to be well-nigh impracticable? and would it not have been in better keeping with the character of a God of love, had there been fewer obstructions on our road to heaven, or the bliss of our coming

immortality been reached by an easier and more accessible path? It is spoken of as an intolerable grievance that we should be punished for what is natural, and only rewarded for an obedience which, save in the cases of a select and privileged few, is greatly beyond the strength of nature.

14. Now in this chapter we are presented with a complete and conclusive analogy, which, if it do not establish the reality of our religious trial, at least serves to vindicate it against the exceptions which we have just enumerated. Whatever doubt we may stand in regarding those doctrines which respect the future and the unseen, there can be no quarrelling with present and actually observed facts. If the doctrine be, that the way to our eternal good is a way of labour and self-denial, it is in perfect analogy with the fact that this is the way to our temporal good also. It is quite palpable that often many toils must be undergone, and many temptations resisted, ere we can secure the most highly prized advantages of the life that now is; and the conclusion is, not that similar toils and temptations must, but that they may be the precursors and the preparatives of our happiness in another state of being. In both cases a future and greater good is sacrificed to present ease or present gratification. If religion tells us that men, by the indulgence of their sloth or their passions, often forfeit the good of their eternity, experience tells us that in the very same way men do often forfeit the wealth and health of a whole lifetime. In this respect the season of youth stands related to the seasons of manhood or old age, very much according to the way in which we are told that the acts or habits of man on this side of death stand related to his state, whether in respect of suffering or enjoyment, on the other side of death. In both we behold the same recklessness, the same defiance to consequences, and the same misrule of headstrong or overmastering appetites—and that, too, in the face of all hazards and apprehensions, whether for time or for eternity, whether of disgrace and poverty in this world, or of never-ending wretchedness in the next. If because of these things we must give up the God of religion, we should give up the God of nature also. If we per-

sist in our objection notwithstanding these analogies, then should we conclude, either that we are under the regimen of an unrighteous Deity, or that there is no Deity at all. And there are certain aggravations in our lot which furnish the enemies of religion with other topics of invective against it, but which are similarly matched by what takes place under our own observation, so that the futurities of which we are told beyond the day of human life, are analogous to facts and fulfillments within it of which we have the daily experience. That men, for example, should be in worse circumstances for the preparations of another world by the neglect of parents, or a wrong education, or in any way by the influence and example of others, thus suffering for a wickedness not originally their own, this is quite of a piece with the manner in which the interests of a more advanced stage in our journey here are affected not merely by our own misconduct, but by the misconduct towards us of relatives or associates during its earlier stages. And thus it is, too, that as continued indulgence, whether in idleness or pleasure, is constantly adding to the difficulties which attend our prosecution of a right course of education for eternity, the very same thing takes place regarding our interests in time—inso much, that the dissipations, nay, even but the delays of slothfulness and the love of ease, persisted in for a few years of early life, might bring on such an utter incapacity for the restraints of labour or business, as might ruin one's temporal prospects, and subject him to degradation and want throughout the whole of his existence in this world, as penalties for the mismanagement of his younger days.

15. Butler, in one brief paragraph of this chapter, exceeds the usual aim and limit of his argument, and aspires to an absolute vindication of the ways of God. He tells us, that in regard to religion, there is no more required of men than what they are well able to do, and well able to go through. We fear that he here makes the first, though not the only exhibition which occurs in the work of his meagre and moderate theology. There seems no adequate view in this passage of man's total inability for what is spiritually and acceptably good; for, by

the very analogy which he institutes, the doctrine of any special help to that obedience which qualifies for heaven is kept out of sight. We are represented as fit for the work of religion in the same way that we are fit, by a moderate degree of care, for managing our temporal affairs with tolerable prudence. There is no account made here of that peculiar helplessness which obtains in the matters of religion, and that does not obtain in the matters of ordinary prudence, yet a helplessness which forms no excuse, lying, as it does, in the resolute and, by man himself, unconquerable aversion of his will to God and godliness. There is nothing in this to break the analogies on which to found the negative vindication that forms the great and undoubted achievement of this volume, and with which, perhaps, it were well if both its author and its readers would agree to be satisfied. The analogy lies here—that if a man wills to obtain prosperity in this life, he may, if observant of the rules which experience and wisdom prescribe, in general make it good; and if he will to attain to blessedness in the next life, he shall, if observant of what religion prescribes, and in conformity with the declaration that he who seeketh findeth, he shall most certainly make it good. It is true that in the latter and larger case the condition is universally wanting; for man, in his natural state, has no relish and no will for that holiness without which he cannot see God. But to meet this peculiar helplessness there has been provided a peculiar remedy; for God makes a people willing in the day of His power, and gives His Holy Spirit to them who ask it—so as to give forth, not an analogous and neutral, but a special, and that a positive demonstration of the Divine goodness. It had been well if in this matter Bishop Butler had attempted to carry the analogy no farther than it will go. Sound as his general views were on what might be termed the philosophy of religion, this formed no security against the errors of a lax and superficial creed on certain of its specific doctrines, any more than the comprehensive philosophy of Lord Bacon formed a safeguard against the crudities into which he fell when he entered in detail on the lessons of physical science.

16. Bating the exception that we have now made, we deem

this chapter to be one of the most successful in the volume, as holding forth a perfect specimen of analogy between what we observe of the present and what we are told of the future life—in that the good things of both are offered, not to our acceptance, but to our acquisition, and this an acquisition which can only be made out at the expense of great painstaking and self-denial. He undertakes not to say why this is, but acquiesces in the finding that so it is in the spirit of that just and characteristic philosophy which refrains from speculating further on the constitution of nature till it shall know the whole or much more of the case, and resting satisfied with it as a sufficient basis for its argument that this constitution is as it is.

17. Before proceeding further, there is one general exception, not against the reasonings of this chapter only, but against the reasonings of the whole volume, which we should like to dispose of. It is grounded on the consideration of the infinitely larger interests of the future than of the present state of being. The analogy might be admitted as complete *in kind* between the hardship of a ruined fortune in this world because of misconduct or neglect, and the hardship, from the same cause, of a ruined eternity; but, along with this, there might be the lurking imagination of a failure in the analogy because of the tremendous difference between these two hardships in point of degree. The one, or smaller of the two, and of which there is no questioning the reality, because palpably acted before our eyes, may be tolerated as somehow consistent with the moral perfections of God, while the other, because incomparably the larger, and which we do not yet see, but are only told of, may be resented and resisted as an incredible outrage on all equity and goodness; or, while the one might pass, the other might be regarded as a serious impeachment on the character of the Deity.

18. Now to meet this alleged difficulty, let it first be observed, that the objection thus conjured up involves in it a wrong moral principle. If there be indeed injustice in the larger dispensation, then in the analogous smaller there must be injustice also—and he that is unfaithful in the least is unfaithful also in much; so that, we must either give up the

character, and with this, perhaps, the being of God, or admit that there is not the reality, but only, at worst, the semblance of injustice in both. And the truth is, that they who thus reason upon degrees, and would acquiesce in the smaller while they vehemently exclaim against the larger iniquity, are unconsciously running themselves into inconsistency, and supplying their adversaries with the means of an ample vindication. Once that there is a toleration for unrighteousness or severity in the littles of the Divine government—as if this could be compensated by its beneficence and justice on the larger scale of eternity, or among the higher orders of creation—then all the degradation and distress to which inferior creatures of humbler faculties and ephemeral duration are subjected might be allowed to pass, if only made up for by the gifts and the felicities which are heaped on the noble creature man—as if the richness of his liberality in matters of higher concern, and to beings of higher consideration, conferred a license for all lesser acts of caprice or cruelty in things of inferior moment. But to prove how inapplicable this whole reasoning about degrees is to the affairs of an universal administration in the hands of the infinite and unsearchable God, it should be recollected, that if there be hardship in the destruction of a reptile, and this can be compensated by His exuberant and overpassing goodness to man, then let there be hardship in the destruction of a world, and of all who live in it, and there is room too for this being compensated in that amplitude of innumerable worlds to which our own is but an atom on the high field of immensity, and which are peopled, for aught we know, by beings of a far more exalted order than ourselves. It is altogether vain to reason of degrees amid the exhaustless varieties of a universe that is boundless—when in one direction there is an infinitude ever rising and expanding, and in the other a microscopic descent to regions of still deeper mystery. If injustice is at all to be tolerated—if it may be acquiesced in among the lower places, as it were, of creation, then may it be carried indefinitely higher, and still above and beyond would there be room for compensation in wider and loftier theatres for the manifestation and exercise

of all those perfections, whether of love or of righteousness, which enter into the nature of the Godhead. But far the likelier solution is, that if there be the semblance of injustice in the Divine government anywhere, it is but a semblance, and that on the part of God there is real injustice nowhere. We have access to but a little part of His ways; and meanwhile, it should be enough for at least the silencing of objections, that we have the analogy of what is seen to what both the Natural and the Christian Theology tell us of the unseen—satisfied to wait for the final disclosure, when it will be found of God that He has done all things well, and that there is no unrighteousness in Him.

CHAPTER V.

OF A STATE OF PROBATION, AS INTENDED FOR MORAL DISCIPLINE AND IMPROVEMENT.

THE PRAYER.

THOU, O God, hast placed us in a world that is full of danger and full of tribulation. But we rejoice that there is a power greater than the world upon our side—that the faith which overcometh all things hath the promise of the Spirit, of whom Thou hast said, greater is He that is in us than he that is in the world. May we watch for this Spirit with all perseverance, that directed by its guidance, that animated by its strength, we may be borne off more than conquerors from every scene of duty and of difficulty through Him who loved us.

19. The present chapter stands in the same relation to the one preceding it which that on the moral does to that on the natural government of God. It still treats of probation, but of probation with a particular end—even that of schooling men in the practice, and so as to confirm them in the habits of virtue. The philosophic caution of the outset, and then the description given by him of the education of habits, are alike characteristic of the modesty and the observant sagacity of Butler. A just discernment of all that is within the sphere of competent

knowledge, and a disinclination to speculate, far less to dogmatize, on all which is without that sphere, are fruits of the same right inductive spirit, and are both of them the constituents of true science. The evils that he remarks would ensue were man introduced all at once with mature faculties into a mature state of life, instead of having to undergo a slow process of education, afford not a positive solution, but somewhat like a glimpse of probability and promise toward a full understanding at length of the imperfections of our present state. But on this, too, he only touches, and wisely forbears to theorize.

20. It seems a bold analogy to institute between the waste of so many vegetable seeds, destroyed in vast numbers before they have attained or fulfilled the proper end of their creation, and the ruin of so many moral agents, the great majority of whom have hitherto and throughout the successive generations of the world, apparently fallen short of that blissful immortality for which the theatre of our present life is fitted to discipline and prepare them. This were indeed an insufficient basis on which to found any affirmative conclusion—though it is not too much to say that the one phenomenon is as unaccountable as the other—which is enough for the purposes of our argument, that is not designed and does not pretend to account for “the whole end and the whole occasion of mankind being placed in such a state as the present.” The main object of the reasoning here, and indeed of the volume at large, is not to demonstrate what is, but what may be, the possible rather than the actual, and so as to prepare the subject in question for the full benefit of those other reasonings which serve to build it up unto the article of a creed. The two things thus brought into comparison, however like in kind, are widely different in degree, and ere the analogy between them can be sustained, the principle which we have just tried to expound in section 18, must not only be understood but acquiesced in.

21. We do not understand that under the economy of grace the law of habit has been repealed, or any other indeed of those laws of our mental nature on which Butler proceeds in the reasonings of this chapter. Whatever the peculiar aids

and expedients of the gospel might be for the perfecting of our meetness for heaven, they supersede not the efficacy of that process under which, by reason of use, the senses are exercised to discern between good and evil, Heb. v. 14; and we may add, too, the powers are either enfeebled or strengthened, according as we yield to the temptations of the one, or fulfil the lessons of the other. But though there might be nothing in this chapter which is distinctly or articulately in conflict with revealed truth, yet the impression which on the whole it is fitted to give, is not altogether in keeping with it. It seems in fact to represent the matter so as if man could at his own pleasure turn himself from the path of degeneracy, and gradually, or by little and little, through the strengthening influence of habit, accomplish his own recovery. And as if in counterpart to this the author gives an ideal representation of the manner in which man has been brought into a state of moral ruin—that is by a slight deflection at the first, and a gently declining path from one stage of corruption to another afterwards. Now one cannot help being struck with a palpable incongruousness or want of harmony between this hypothetical fall of Bishop Butler and the historical fall of Scripture, which is there said to have taken place *per saltum*, or with all the suddenness of a catastrophe, and so as to have effected an instant transition from a relationship of peace and favour to a relationship of enmity with God. But let us only consider the effect of a first sin, and it will be found that the account in the Bible has not only more of authority on its side, but is really in better accordance both with the nature of the case itself, and with the nature of man. Certain it is, that in civil government a single offence might not only put the transgressor into full hostility with the law, but incur for him an instant disruption from all the fellowships of creditable society—just as the single offence of Adam both constituted him at once an outlaw, and expelled him from the high and heavenly companionship of Paradise. And the effect was not more instantaneous upon his state than upon his character. For the love of God would, under the misgivings of conscious guilt, give place to a sentiment of dread

and alienation, nay, of hatred to Him who must now be regarded as an enemy, or in the light of an offended sovereign. It is thus that an instant moral revolution behoved to take place; and as it was by a single act that man passed into a state of ruin, so it is by a single act that he passes into a state of recovery and reconciliation. In the day that he ate of the forbidden fruit he died; but in the day or on the moment of his believing in the Son of God, he passes back again from death unto life. This is the turning-point of his salvation, and by which there is effected not only the instant translation of him into a new hope, but also into a new heart, and so a new character. A new-born love springs up with a new-born confidence, though we doubt not that in the history of this now regenerated creature, the law of habit, as well as all the other unrepealed laws of humanity, will still continue to find their full exemplification. The tenet of justification by faith is at antipodes with the idea of our virtue here being the adequate price, but not with the idea of its being the indispensable preparation for our eternity hereafter. Under the economy of grace heaven is conceived essentially to lie in character—to be in fact but the expansion, the full-grown development of our present charity, our present piety, our present holiness. There is nothing surely in the doctrine and philosophy of habit counter to that system which represents it as the great business of those who have received the promises of the gospel to perfect their holiness—which tells us that what a man soweth, that shall he also reap—which speaks on the one hand of the path of the just, as if his rudimental virtue here were to his perfected virtue hereafter what the dawn of morn is to the shining of the meridian day—and which speaks on the other hand of the wicked being filled with the fruit of their own ways—which, in a word, represents the kingdom of heaven as begun on earth, and at last closes its description of the relation between time and eternity with these impressive words:—"He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; he that is filthy, let him be filthy still; he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; he that is holy, let him be holy still." Nor yet is there aught in the doctrine of the Spirit's

agency which conflicts with what is here said of certain natural principles in the constitution of man, and of the share which they have in the growth and establishment of human virtue. The agency of the Spirit is completely reconcilable with all those successions in the phenomena of our nature which have ever met the observation or been at all reasoned upon by philosophers. The supernatural is effected without violence or derangement to the harmonies of the natural. A light and power are given, yet all the processes of mind, so far as they are discoverable by us, move in their wonted order; and if the strengthening and confirming power of habit be one of these processes, then may we rest assured that after the revelation of a spiritual influence, it still remains a fit subject for all the discrimination and argument which the sound and sagacious Butler has bestowed on it.

22. The oversight of Butler, in that he lays down a hypothetical which quadrates so little with the historical fall, is, that he has not at all adverted to the essential moral element which attaches to a first sin. By the first transgression, there is not merely a commencement made on a gently declining path, but there is a sudden transition effected into a new state of relationship with God. On the moment of transgression we become rebels to God, a sense of guilt enters the heart, and along with it the distrust, the alienation, the fears of guilt. We can no longer go freely forth to Him in willing and affectionate obedience, and a sudden moral disruption takes place between us and God. The narrative in the book of Genesis will be found, we are persuaded, far more accordant with the real nature of the human constitution. So that, instead of that gradual and progressive descent which Bishop Butler imagines, there is in fact a passage *per saltum* from a state of innocence to that opposite state in which man feels himself deserted by the only principle that can give life or value to his obedience, and landed in a condemnation which by himself is irrevocable.

23. But it is chiefly in his description of the reverse movement that our author discovers what I would call the meagreness of his Christianity. In making recovery from an undone state, he seems to regard nothing more as necessary than a

strenuous and sustained endeavour on the part of man to acquire new habits, and shake off the tyranny of old ones. He forgets that a breach must be removed, that the sense of guilt must be taken away, that a reconciliation must be effected, and that it is only in the confidence of such reconciliation that man can go forth again with alacrity and vigour in the services of a new obedience. What he says of the vast majority finding the world to be a school of vice rather than of virtue, forms a most impressive commentary on the insufficiency of all natural motives and natural expedients for the world's regeneration. Nothing else, let us be assured, save the offered pardon of the gospel, possesses the charm and the efficacy of awakening us again to the virtue from which we had departed; and it is only by the tidings of a sacrifice and the promises of a Spirit falling with acceptance on the hearts of our outcast species, that man will return unto God; or that in the universal reign of righteousness and truth, the Cross of Christ will behold the consummation of its triumphs.

CHAPTER VI.

OF THE OPINION OF NECESSITY, CONSIDERED AS INFLUENCING PRACTICE.

THE PRAYER.

THOU reignest supreme, O God, in the moral as well as in the material universe. Thou turnest the hearts of men whithersoever Thou wilt: Thy command reaches to the processes of the living as well as to those of the inanimate creation; and while there is a countless diversity of operations, it is God who worketh all in all. We would comfort ourselves with the thought that the Lord God omnipotent reigneth; and we are persuaded that when the mystery of God is finished, it will be found Thou hast done all things well, and that their final consummation is worthy of Thy perfect goodness and Thy perfect intelligence.

24. It is obvious from this chapter, that Butler partook, with almost all the English theologians of his age, in that religious

horror so often felt and expressed by them against the doctrine of Necessity. And certain it is, that in the minds of its advocates this tenet stood very generally associated at that time both with infidelity in religion, and with an utter subversion of the first principles, nay, of the very being and substance of morality. It was more particularly imagined, that it annulled the distinction between virtue and vice, and did away with man's responsibility. Leibnitz, however, though a Necessitarian, retained the orthodoxy notwithstanding, both of his Christian and ethical principles; and we are persuaded that had his views been more thoroughly understood by Clarke and the other metaphysicians of our own country, or had Edwards appeared a century earlier, there would not have been the indiscriminate and undistinguishing abuse of this doctrine which then characterized, and which still continues to mark, the writings of the divines in the Church of England.

25. This is not the place for entering upon a discussion of the subject. It will be enough to observe, that many are the advocates of a philosophical necessity in our present day, who retain entire both the accountableness of man and the reality of moral distinctions, and to whom therefore this chapter of the Analogy is wholly uncalled for. They hold that there is nothing in this doctrine which can do away, which can ever dilute, or cast a dimness on the argument for a God, from the symptoms of intelligence that are everywhere apparent in the constitution of visible things. They hold that there is nothing in it to nullify the doctrine of a moral government. They admit its consistency both with a will and a character in man, and with a will and a character in God. In short, they conceive that it leaves every doctrinal and every practical principle of theology just where it found them. And whereas Dr. Butler would place us in this dilemma, that our principles will not hold in practice—that after all we are obliged to act as if free—and that as the course of nature proceeds, in its dispensation of rewards and punishments, on the system of liberty, therefore that system must be true;—we would retort by our utter unconsciousness of there being anything in that doctrine

of necessity we so strenuously hold, which takes away from choice and deliberation and character in religion, that Butler himself reasons upon the consistency of our doctrine with all these things. And therefore, after all, it may not be so violent and monstrous a speculation as it was apprehended to be in his days, and as it is still apprehended to be among those anti-Calvinists of the south, who profess to be revolted by the harsh and uncomplying features of our Scottish Theology, by the horrors of its gloomy and repulsive Calvinism.

26. It is strange that Butler should labour to demonstrate, and indeed succeeds in demonstrating, that there is nothing in the system of Necessity which ought to infer Atheism, and yet that he should ascribe to the abettors of this system a disposition to Atheism. Why does he not conceive it possible that a man may be a Necessitarian, and yet have the very view he himself has of its bearing on the theistical argument? We often read of a man not being chargeable with all the consequences of his belief, because it is a possible thing that he may not perceive them; but here we have the example of a man being made chargeable with that which is not the consequence of his belief, and which is even proved to be not the consequence by the very person who makes the charge. This is one instance of the hard dealing in the way of moral and religious imputation, to which Necessitarians have been exposed at the hands of their adversaries.

27. He conceives that a pupil, coming forth upon the world charged with the lessons of this system, would abandon himself to utter carelessness in regard to his conduct. A few considerations put in the questionnaire form may perhaps disabuse the mind of this apprehension. Suppose a pupil of this doctrine were told that a certain line of conduct was *often* followed up by the contempt and hatred of society, what effect should this information naturally have upon him? To make him shun the conduct because fearful of its consequence. But suppose that instead of being told it was so followed up *often*, it was followed up *always*,—whether would this enhance or relax the prudential obligation to avoid the obnoxious conduct? Most

certainly to enhance it, because now certain of its hurtful consequence. And whether does the being followed up often, or the being followed up *always*, present the likeliest sequence to those which would take place under the system of Necessity? Or instead of looking to the conduct of the pupil, let us look to that of the master or educationist, and put the following questions as to him:—1. Suppose he were told that the *frequent* effect of a certain argument, when presented to the minds of his pupils, was to recall them from a course of misconduct, what effect is this naturally fitted to have upon him? Surely to make him ply that argument.—2. Suppose that instead of the *frequent*, he was told that it was the *constant* effect of this argument,—whether should that strengthen or weaken his inducement to press it home? The reply is obvious as any truism.—3. And whether in the *frequent* or in the *constant* is it that we recognise an invariable sequence? In the constant.—4. But which of the two systems, that of Liberty or Necessity, is it which pleads for the sequences of the moral world being invariable? That of Necessity.—5. Is there aught then in the said doctrine of Necessity, which has been so arraigned as the enemy alike of wisdom and virtue—is there aught in it to lessen, and not rather to strengthen and confirm all the motives to right conduct? So much for Butler's assertion that Necessity is not applicable to practical subjects.

28. By the same mode of reasoning, it will be found that there is nothing in this doctrine to invalidate, but, on the contrary, to fix all the more surely, the inference for a God from final causes. We should infer, for example, a benevolence in God from the vast amount of happiness produced by the various mechanisms around us. But doubtless it would make the conclusion all the more certain, if we conceived the connexion to be invariable between a disposition in the mind of Deity and the effect of that disposition in His works. But we need not dwell on this, as Butler himself thinks that the doctrine of Necessity is reconcilable with a character in God, and as reconcilable with the particular character of benevolence and truth and justice as any other.

29. There is one great oversight respecting the scheme of Necessity into which our opponents are constantly falling, and in which Butler himself participates—else this chapter might have been spared. No doubt our Necessity implies the absolute sureness of every event that is to happen, whether in the department of mind or of matter; but still it is a necessity not irrespective of that which went before the event, neither will it be without fruit or efficacy on that which is to follow. Ours is a necessity running in trains of sequences, and which is made up of the invariableness, wherewith the terms of sequences follow each other. It is not a necessity which fixes anything whatever in the character of an isolated or unconnected event—but of an event that came into being, because of another that preceded it, and wherewith it is related by the tie of invariableness. Let the difference between these two necessities be well pondered, and it will be found that, in regard to influence on the practice of men, the one is *toto cælo* dissimilar from the other. The necessity of which no other account can be given than that it has been fixed by some decree of inexorable fatalism, and must therefore come to pass by whatever antecedents it has been preceded, or in the midst of whatever circumstances it is to spring into fulfilment—such a necessity as this might well paralyze all the activity of man's doings or of man's deliberations, superseding as it does every effort of his to set aside the irrevocable sentence which he cannot annul, and cannot make head against. But if, instead of this, it be a necessity not made good under whatever antecedents, but made good by those antecedents of which itself is but one of the consequents—a necessity not evolved into being in whatever circumstances, but a necessity essentially linked with these circumstances, and the mere result of that constancy in nature wherewith the same effect always proceeds from the same cause or combination of causes;—then, such a necessity as this, so far from chilling men into apathy and inaction, will be found as favourable to the development of all the energies of his active and intellectual nature as any system of liberty that can possibly be devised.

30. Grant that my earthly fortune is immutably determined in the chain of causes and effects, this does not dissolve but rather strengthens the alliance between industry and prosperity; and so, under such a system, it is my right and rational part to put forth as much exertion as before for the purpose of realizing it. Grant that my eternal state is already made sure in the counsels of the Eternal, this does not break up the affinity between a character on this side of death, and a condition on the other side of it; and so, to make myself sure of a blissful eternity, I have the same inducement as ever to make good the faith and the holiness that always go before it. Grant that the salvation of my child has already been made the subject of a decree—it is not by a decree which but fastens and makes sure this individual event, but a decree which generally is carried into effect by the progression of the usual antecedents of prayer, and example, and instruction, on the part of the parent; and so there should be no relaxation, but the contrary, of all those busy expedients which a father ought to ply for the immortal wellbeing of those who have sprung from him. There is not one of the connexions between a cause and a consequent, between a means and an end, broken up by such a system of necessity. The connexion is only made all the surer than before, instead of being that wayward, capricious, fluctuating thing, which would make all activity hopeless, and all prudence inapplicable or unavailing. It does not loosen, it cements the various parts which compose a mechanism of instrumentality—so that, instead of paralyzing, it guides and animates human exertion when busily plying whatever instrument for the attainment of that good which it is fitted to realize. Let us be assured, therefore, that necessity, when rightly understood, instead of laying an arrest on the powers and purposes of man, or in any way destroying his spontaneity, leaves him as busy and active and vigilant and painstaking and diligent and ever-doing a creature as before.

CHAPTER VII.

OF THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD, CONSIDERED AS A SCHEME OR
CONSTITUTION, IMPERFECTLY COMPREHENDED.

THE PRAYER.

O God, it is but a small part of Thy ways that is submitted to our observation, and how then can we comprehend the mystery of Thy government, the principle or the end of Thine unsearchable councils. We know but in part, we understand but in part. Give us, O Lord, in this the infancy of our being, to have all the teachableness and humility of children, and by the exercise of faith and charity, those great virtues of our present and preparatory state, may we become meet for the larger manifestations of that coming period when we shall know even as we are known. Meanwhile, O Lord, give us to understand not the piety alone, but the reason and wisdom of casting down all our lofty imaginations, and bringing every thought into the captivity of the obedience of Christ. All we ask is for His sake. Amen.

31. This chapter of Butler reminds one of a very fine observation by Leibnitz. He bids us consider the perfection, the exquisite harmony and adaptation of parts, the absolute faultlessness of every mechanism in nature, which we can see in all its completeness; as, for example, an animal or vegetable, which, viewed as a system, is certainly one of most entire and orderly adjustment, and which, but for certain accidental and disturbing forces, it is quite obvious is fitted to maintain itself in a healthy and pleasurable state of existence. This is all the more wonderful, that it is a system made up of so many parts, yet the want of any one of which, or even the want of it in a certain proportion, would derange the functions of the organic apparatus altogether. Now, let it be conceived that we only saw but a part of either of these, whether animal or vegetable, or saw them separated from their relation to the whole—such as a bit of skin, or bone, or membrane, or muscle of the one, or a bit of root or bark or gummy exudation of the other, and

how utterly meaningless, or even deformed an article it would appear in our eyes; and yet when seen in its proper place, and by an eye that can take in that whole system of parts, with their relations, into which it enters, how significant, nay, how indispensable does it evince itself to be, proving the difference that must appear in respect to the use and wisdom of any given thing, when first exhibited to one who can only look to it in its individuality, and then to another who can look to it in connexion with the entire combination whereof it forms a part.

32. Now this admits of an all-important application, and Leibnitz has made the application most beautifully and effectively. Let us only conceive this world in the light of an individual or a part, which we might well do in relation to the immensity that surrounds it, and more especially since our modern science has made it known to us, that immensity teems with worlds and systems of worlds innumerable. And let us further conceive of our present generation, or rather of all the ages put together, which the light of history irradiates, that they but disclose one temporary evolution of a plan which originated in the depths of the eternity that is past, and has its indefinite outgoings in the eternity before us—and then let us put the question, Whether, in proportion to God's universal scheme, we really have access, by our own observation, to more than the veriest fragment of any organic structure in the animal or vegetable kingdom? In the plainer language of Butler, individuals have certain peculiar relations to other individuals of their own species, nor do we know how far these relations extend; and hence this world, in the midst of this peopled universe, may be but as the individual of a mighty empire. And he further says, that all events have future unknown consequences; and hence to estimate the character of present events or present appearances, we must ascertain their issues in the endless futurity on the other side of death: and so it comes again to the question, Whether a creature, so beset and bound in all his faculties as man, can sit in judgment on the plans and counsels of a Being whose eye reaches both to the infinite of space and the infinite of duration?—whether, with his

limited access to so small a part of the universal machine, and his short-lived observation to so small a time of its working, he, on present appearances, is at all warranted to pronounce upon the whole; or to set aside the positive evidence of religion because of objections which can only be legitimately urged by one who knows the whole scope and evolution of the Divine workmanship, and the whole mind and purposes of its author.

33. From the doctrine of this chapter we may perceive how it is, that in proportion to the enlargement of one's philosophy may be the submissiveness of his faith. A man of bounded views could not comprehend the solution given of the apparent difficulties of religion, by such minds as those of Leibnitz and Butler. He is conversant with individuals and not with relations, and least of all with that relation on which the answer to objectors is here suspended—the relation of his own little sphere to the vast unknown that is around it. He is incapable of conceiving the magnitude of duration as it reaches onward to eternity; he is alike incapable of conceiving the magnitude of space as it extends without limit on every side of us, and holds within its ample reservoir an infinity of worlds. Such views as these call for a reach and elevation of sentiment which do not belong to him; but who does not see, that in proportion to the capacity of making this wide survey of things, must be the emphasis of the lesson which proceeds on our incapacity of resolving all, of reconciling all? In very proportion to the extent of our knowledge does there open upon us, though in dim perspective, that region of mystery where lie an exceeding multitude of things either wholly unknown to us, or known but imperfectly. It is because with every increase of diameter in the sphere of light, there is an increase of surface in the circumambient darkness; it is because with every step of advance on the path of knowledge, the onward obscurity retires a little, no doubt, but at the place where it begins is as deeply shrouded and presents a greater number of profound and unfathomable recesses than before; it is because, for example or illustration, the more powerful telescope, which now casts tenfold irradiation

tion on the moon or on a planet, summons into vision millions of distant and hitherto unobserved suns, which but tell of their bare existence, and leave in secrecy impenetrable both the moral and the physical economy of the unknown and the unnumbered worlds that roll around them—in a word, it is because every accession to the truths and the discoveries of science but brings into notice the still more impracticable difficulties, the still deeper arcana which lie beyond them ;—this is the reason why, while on the one hand, a little learning is a dangerous thing, they are our highest and most colossal men who have evinced the most child-like modesty both in the speculations of theology and of general learning. It is thus, in particular, that the cause of religion has nothing to fear from the cause of an ever advancing, if legitimate, philosophy. The greater the number of objects that come within the circle of our contemplations, the greater also is the number of their unknown relations to the objects in the ulterior and untravelled distances which she has not overtaken. By every footstep she takes in the search after truth, she is more baffled by a sense of her own incompetency to environ the truth that is infinite, the truth that is universal. And when thus overwhelmed by the feeling of her own helplessness, she rises to the thought of that mighty Spirit who created, and who alone, therefore, can comprehend all, she feels that one authentic note of information from Him should outweigh a thousand of her own darkling speculations.

34. The concluding observations of this chapter are all-important for the vindication of Butler's whole argument. They shew most satisfactorily how our ignorance may invalidate the objections against, and yet not invalidate the proof of the thing. The essence of the reasoning here lies in the distinction between our knowledge of God's will and our knowledge of His ways. We have positive proof of His moral character, in virtue of which He wills both the righteousness and the happiness of His creatures ; and yet may be utterly in the dark as to the most effectual ways or methods of procedure by which these objects can be most fully accomplished. We may know the

end, and yet not know the best means of bringing it about. A total ignorance would place both the objections and the proof alike beyond our reach, but a partial ignorance may not. God's wisdom may be learned by its vestiges within the limits of a mere handbreadth, as in the construction of an eye; yet, after having learned this, we may fail in our judgment of the subserviency of things that go out and far from view, whether widely in space or distantly in time. And so within the home-
stead of one's own conscience may we read the lesson of a righteous God, and yet be wholly unable to pronounce on the tendency or effect of those measures which enter into the policy of His universal government.

35. The conclusion of the first part of the Analogy calls for no particular remark, being in the main a recapitulation or summary of what had gone before. It is well that in the closing sentence he should discriminate so palpably between the "proper proofs" of religion and his own analogical reasonings in defence of it—it being the chief function of the latter to neutralize the objections of infidelity, and of the former to build up a positive evidence whether for the doctrine of the natural or the Christian theology.

SECTION II.

THE USE WHICH BUTLER MAKES OF THE ANALOGICAL
ARGUMENT IN THE CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY.

PART II.

CHAPTER I.—OF THE IMPORTANCE OF CHRISTIANITY.

THE PRAYER.

GIVE us a deep sense, O God, of the weight and importance of that revelation which Thou hast made to the world. Make us to feel our need of the Saviour. Visit us with a spirit of concern and of inquiry. Shut us up by the terrors of Thy law to the faith of Thy gospel; and may we take no rest to our souls till we have found it in the revealed and offered Mediator. May we hold it no light matter that we have sinned against God, that the denunciations of a violated law are upon us, and that the truth and justice and unchangeable holiness of Thy nature are committed to the fulfilment of Thy proclaimed threats on the children of iniquity. Do Thou guide all our inquiries whether on the truth or the substance of that message of reconciliation which Thou hast sent into our abode.

1. From the introductory observations of this chapter, we might infer that Butler regards the question of the necessity of revelation as a preliminary to the question of its truth. It has certainly been so treated by the great majority both of theological authors and of theological professors. They proceed as if the first point must be made out ere they are warranted to enter upon the second; and in this way I hold not merely

that a principle of sound reasoning has been violated, but that a general weakening has been inflicted thereby on the Christian argument.

2. The religion of Jesus Christ is essentially a religion of facts; and to its truth we have, through the medium of one branch of its evidences, the same direct access that we have to the truth of any other facts in general history. We have both an original and a derived testimony in behalf of its alleged miracles. We have the professed announcements from heaven to earth wherewith these miracles were associated. We have the record of these announcements, and for the integrity of this record, we can hold up the very light which avails us in any question of ordinary criticism. We walk on firm experimental ground throughout the whole of this investigation, and are led by it to the conclusion, that within the whole compass of antiquity, there has nothing come down to us in the shape of narrative so fully accredited as are the narratives of the gospel. Now, possessed as we are of such competent proofs on the *credibility* of this said revelation, are we to suspend the determination of it till the previous question of its *necessity* has been settled and set by? Are we to forego the consideration of the evidences which lie patent before us on the field of observation till we take up a matter, not so much, let it be noticed, of palpable fact as of recondite principle? The necessity of revelation involves in it topics that stand related both to God and to eternity—to the hidden counsels of the One, to the fathomless unknown, and by us, undiscoverable, of the other. The truth of revelation depends on credentials which lie on an open platform, or certain tangible things within the circle of our perceptions, which have been addressed to human eyes, which have been heard by human ears. It is not sound dialectics to suspend the second of these topics on the first of them. It is like placing a piece of firm architecture on a precarious foundation. It partakes of the vices of that philosophy which, anterior to the days of Lord Bacon, behoved to settle its principles before it would condescend to look upon facts. It is the same as if, instead of giving ourselves up to the business of observation in

order to see what kind of planetarium the Creator had framed, we should keep this work at abeyance till we had rightly adjusted the speculation, what kind of planetarium were best suited to our wants, or what the most reasonable for a God of perfect wisdom to have devised. The first sentence of Paley's work on the Evidences is one of the best he has written. He puts aside the question of the necessity altogether. He treats it as one of the idle preliminaries of the main question. In the act of setting to, he brushes aside, as if by a single movement, the irrelevancies of the argument, and comes at once to close quarters with the matter on hand. I therefore should prefer that the student would read Paley before Leland, rather than that he should read Leland before Paley. Instead of possessing him at the outset with the slender probability—therefore God will do it, I should like better to possess him with the main strength and confidence of the proof—that God has done it, and therefore it must have been necessary.

3. But it is not to be understood from these observations on the necessity of revelation, that we have any other quarrel with the topic than merely with the place which is commonly assigned to it in the logic of our science. The topic itself is interesting; but it presents us with but an auxiliary consideration, and is not entitled to a fundamental place in the argumentative evidence for the truth of Christianity. But there is another species of evidence, to the effect of which, in conversion, the necessity of the gospel, or rather, a sense of its necessity, is of prime and radical importance. We should distinguish between the historical necessity for a revelation under which the world laboured before that the world was visited by its light, and that necessity, or rather that sense of necessity, which exists in the bosom of an individual visited by religious earnestness before that he has been visited by that understanding of the gospel of Jesus Christ which brings relief to his fears and a solution for his difficulties. This belongs not to the historical, but to the internal evidence, and may be shortly stated thus:—When a man is visited, as he often is, in his conscience by a loftier and purer sense than he wont to entertain of the law of God—when he is

further visited, as he often is, in his consciousness by a more vivid conviction of his own distance and deficiency therefrom—when the apprehended truth and righteousness and justice of the Lawgiver give him a more fresh and powerful impression than he ever had that the high authority of heaven is not to be mocked, that its authority is not to be trampled on—when these considerations are brought to bear on the undoubted fact of himself being a defaulter, and he is therefore pressed with the difficulties of the problem, How can I escape from that condemnation which seems essential to be fulfilled, else the legislation of the upper sanctuary is but a mockery and a name?—Here is a strong case of necessity made out; and if there be aught in the subject-matter of the gospel to meet that necessity, the view of it not only ministers relief to the spirit of the inquirer, but, at the same time, carries a most pleasing and a most powerful evidence along with it—the evidence grounded on the adaptation which obtains between the offered remedy of the gospel and the felt necessities of our own nature—an evidence which no other system of religion has, it being the glory and the distinction of the economy under which we sit that it tenders a free and full forgiveness, yet without violence to the rights of heaven's jurisprudence, to the state or dignity of heaven's offended Sovereign.

4. Butler here tells us of Christianity as being, first, a republication of Natural Religion, and then, over and above, as being, in virtue of certain additional lessons and peculiarities of its own, what may be termed a supplement to Natural Religion. But it is worthy of all observation, that every addition which Christianity makes to the clearness and authority of Natural Religion, so far from reducing, in fact aggravates the more our need of a revelation in all those matters which constitute the peculiarities of the gospel. It is a mistake, then, to imagine, that had it stopped short with a republication of the doctrines of Natural Theology, it would have done something in the way of positive addition and advantage for our species. It would but have added to their helplessness and despair. It would have made known to us, in a more vivid and alarming

light, the disease under which we labour, and in so doing, would have made our ignorance of the remedy more intolerably painful. Along with the brighter views which it gave of the obligation and extent of the law, of the august and inviolable sanctity of the Lawgiver, of the authority of that moral government under which we sit, of the awful and unchangeable sanctions by which it was upholden—along with these, it would not darken, but rather supply new and convincing evidence to the fact, that from heaven's rectitude we had universally fallen, and that heaven's jurisprudence had by one and all of us been violated. We should not therefore say of this second part of the Christian revelation, merely that it was additional to the first. The first, in fact, has more in it the character of the proposition of an enigma, and the second brings the solution to it. The first gives us more emphatically to feel our danger and our difficulties, the second brings the way of deliverance before us. There is a necessity for revelation; but it is a mistake to imagine, that what it reveals to us of Natural Religion does away one-half of the necessity. It may be said, in the first instance, rather to thicken the perplexity of an inquirer, and to deepen still more the obscurity of the prospect which lies before him. The first without the second would have been a message of terror and denunciation to the world. It is the second which reconciles all difficulties; and besides adding the light of its own manifestation to all that we previously knew of the things of an invisible world, it resolves all the doubts and hushes all the fears which the first had awakened.

5. In addition to the clear and admirable observations of Bishop Butler in this chapter on the distinction between moral and positive duties, we have only to remark, that though the former be of higher value in themselves, and of higher estimation in the sight of God than the latter, yet obedience to the latter may be often a more discriminative and decisive test of a man's religiousness than obedience to the former. A moral duty has both the will of God and its own native rectitude to recommend it; and in as far as the last of these two motives is concerned, it is often felt and proceeded on in virtue of the natu-

ral morality among men. There are many who would recoil from fraud, who would act on the impulse of generosity, who would maintain courteousness in their fellowship with others, wholly apart from the consideration of a Lawgiver in heaven ; but to keep the Sabbath, for example, is not a dictate of natural morality at all. There is not the same composition of influences concerned in this that there is in those duties which possess a natural rectitude antecedent to all jurisprudence. The will of God is more singly and separately our inducement for the observance of this or any other of the positive institutions ; so that, when there is neither hypocrisy nor the mechanical influence of habit in the case, the circumstance of a man being a good Sabbath-keeper may be a more decisive indication of that which strictly and philosophically one would denominate religiousness of character, than the circumstance of a man being a good neighbour, a good payer of his debts, a good landlord, or possessed of any one or all of those qualifications which, in the ordinary sense of the term, constitute a good member of society.

6. At the close of this chapter we meet with a sentiment of most unsafe tendency and application in the hands of those who do not estimate aright the natural ignorance of man, and so would invest him with a mastery over a far larger range of speculation than with his beset and bounded faculties he is at all able to overtake. It is, that "if in revelation there be found any passages, the seeming meaning of which is contrary to Natural Religion, we may certainly conclude such seeming meaning not to be the real one."* It is under the cover of such a sentiment that both infidelity and heresy have indulged in all sorts of licentiousness—the one in rejecting Christianity, and the other in transforming it. Nothing can be more obvious than that Christianity must be so understood as to square with the certainties of all known truth, or be rejected altogether, whether that truth lie in the department of Natural Religion or anywhere else ; but it is equally obvious that the Theology of the Bible should be brought to the tribunal of an antecedent Natural Theology, only in so far as it is a just and right Natural Theology, or to the extent only in which its doctrines are

* Analogy, p. 176.—Fitzgerald's Edition.

clear and unquestionable, else any revelation, however well accredited, were liable to be either misinterpreted or set aside, and that on the authority of every hypothesis, however wanton and however presumptuous. There is no danger of a conflict between reason and revelation when reason keeps within her own proper sphere, and proceeds aright on the knowledge and observation of her own limits. But these limits are often transgressed both by the proud and the imaginative; and hence it is that Deism, on the strength of her Natural Religion, has passed sentence of condemnation on the gospel of Jesus Christ, and Socinianism, on the strength of hers, has diluted it to the quality of its own meagreness.

CHAPTER II.

OF THE SUPPOSED PRESUMPTION AGAINST A REVELATION,
CONSIDERED AS MIRACULOUS.

THE PRAYER.

WE desire, O God, to do homage to the Son in all our approaches to the Father. We esteem it a faithful saying, that His is the only name given under heaven whereby men can be saved. We make mention of Him as the Lord our righteousness, and we pray that He may be made unto us the Lord our strength. May His word dwell in us richly in all wisdom; and may the Spirit which is at His giving animate us with all strength in the inner man, that we may not be justified only, but also washed and sanctified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

7. Butler was antecedent to Hume; nor is it very clear, from what appears in this chapter, how he would have met the subtle objections of this last-named philosopher, though probably by an appeal to the obvious phenomena of belief in testimony.—I am not sure that he would have done more than this. He would have likened miracles to the extraordinary phenomena of nature, and then adverted to the perfect confidence wherewith these are listened to and received on the report of credible eye-witnesses. He would have bestowed a few touches of his

sagacity upon the question; but neither his taste, nor perhaps his talent, would have led him so thoroughly to scrutinize the argument as to disarm it of all power to puzzle and to deceive us.

8. Nevertheless, the observations which he has bequeathed upon this subject have not been overlooked by those who followed him in the work of sustaining the Christian religion against the assaults of infidelity. It is evident that both Campbell and Price felt the importance even of the brief remarks which have fallen from him; and the former, in particular, makes use of the argument that he draws from the power even of a very slight testimony, to accredit what, but for that testimony, would have had a very strong improbability against it. But there is a peculiarity here overlooked, I think, by all the three reasoners. They suppose, in the first instance, a series of events to have come gratuitously into one's mind; and, after stating the almost infinite number of chances against its being true, suppose, in the second instance, these very events to be deposed to by a credible witness. Now, that both the first and the second of these things should happen in coincidence together were the strongest possible unlikelihood; and Butler says truly, that the presumption against a miracle is a small presumption additional to this; for, in fact, this were itself a miracle. After that, in the silent depository of my own thoughts, I had figured a story made up of complex and various incidents, another should present himself and narrate the identical story in all its particulars, deponing, at the same time, to the truth of it, this were not an ordinary testimony to an ordinary series of events. The man who did so I should credit with the power of divination. I should regard him as a prophet; and, instead of having the mere commonplace marks of credibility about him, I should view him as armed with the vouchers of a miraculous personage. To predict ordinary events in the very way they are to happen were not more extraordinary than for one man to divine ordinary events in the very way that another has conceived them; and the case is altogether different, when, instead of the story being for the first time presented to me by my own imagination, it is for the first time presented to me in the plain narrative of a plain witness; and when, in-

stead of bringing to me the marvellous confirmation of a mere reverie of my own, he brings, *ab extra*, and from the place whence he came, a narrative of events that took place under his own observation. The proper way of estimating the strength of the presumption against, or of the proof that would be necessary for the establishment of a miracle, is to bring it into comparison, not with the presumption against the truth of a previously conceived story, but with the presumption against the truth of an already reported story that related to events which were not miraculous. There will be found in this case a difference very much greater than the small additional presumption which Butler speaks of; and so, however striking or original his observation may be, there seems nothing in it which can guide us into a right track for the solution of the difficulty that since his time has so exercised the skill of controversialists.*

CHAPTER III.

OF OUR INCAPACITY OF JUDGING WHAT WERE TO BE EXPECTED IN A REVELATION; AND THE CREDIBILITY, FROM ANALOGY, THAT IT MUST CONTAIN THINGS APPEARING LIABLE TO OBJECTIONS.

THE PRAYER.

WE esteem it, O God, a faithful saying, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, and we accept with thankfulness all the information which Thou hast given respecting the design and the efficacy of His death. We would receive with gratitude and with faith the announcement that He died as a propitiation for the sins of the world, and that this propitiation was rendered that mercy and truth might meet together, and that righteousness and peace might enter into fellowship. We would carry our speculation no farther than to the plain verities and informations of the Bible, and desire to rejoice in these as worthy of our most cordial acceptance.

9. This we hold to be a very important chapter, both because of the satisfactory deliverance which it makes on the

* [See note, with extract from Mill's Logic, in Fitzgerald's Edition of the Analogy, p. 184.—W. H.]

special topic, and of the insight which it gives into the spirit and philosophy of Butler's whole argument, as grounded on a very clear perception of the limit between the knowable and the unknowable, and of the treatment due to the respective things which belong to the one or the other of these regions. Let there be but evidence to the amount of establishing the certainty, or even the probability, of what actually exists in the first, and this will completely overbear any presumption founded on what is only guessed at or imagined in the second. The spirit evinced by our author is identical with that of the experimental or the Baconian philosophy—a spirit, in the first instance, of the utmost hardihood in resolutely maintaining to be true all that accords with the findings of experience; and a spirit, in the second instance, of the utmost humility in that sentiment of utter diffidence and distrust wherewith it regards all the fancies of presumptuous, however plausible, speculation.

10. With this principle, which in its very essence is a Baconian one, then, on sufficient evidence, we shall admit of a thing that *so it is*, although profoundly ignorant of *how it is*. To speak in the language of the scholastics, it is evidence, and that alone, which must determine the *quiddity* of any thing; and of this we may have all possible degrees of belief up to thorough conviction, under the most perfect and entire ignorance of the *quomodo* of that thing. We are forced by sense and experience to admit that the course of nature is such, and yet may not be able even to approximate to the solution of the question, why such? and, in like manner, we may be led by evidence of another sort—by the evidence of credible testimony, for example—which, after all, resolves itself, by tracing back the process of derivation, into the evidence of sense and experience;—we may be led by this evidence to believe that such is the scheme of an actual revelation from heaven, and yet may not be able to explain how it is such a scheme rather than another. The objection founded on the scheme being such as it is, and that in the face of evidence for its being the actual scheme of an actual revelation, is just an irrationality

of the same sort as to refuse the evidence of the senses in regard to the actual course of nature, because it is a course, the reasons and principles of which we do not comprehend. To be able to comprehend them, we would need such an acquaintance as we have not, with the plans, and the purposes, and the policy of Him who is the ruler of nature. To presume, then, on some plan imagined by ourselves as being indeed the plan of the Eternal Mind, and to quarrel with the phenomena, whether of nature or of a proved revelation, as being not agreeable thereto, is to fetch something from the *terra incognita* of conjecture, and with it to overbear another something brought home, whether in the shape of a certainty or of a probability, from the *terra cognita* of observation. This is the very spirit which Bacon would abjure, which Newton would abjure, which every sound experimentalist of the present day would abjure. It is wrong in the things of natural, it is wrong in the things of supernatural knowledge. And could we only succeed in tutoring the spirits of our young disciples to the truth and the soberness of that logic which we are now labouring to impress, it would, on the former of those grounds, conduct them to a right philosophy, and on the latter to a right faith.

11. The object of this chapter is to prove the likelihood, in the general, of a revelation being liable to objections, or at least that its being so forms no proper ground for the rejection of it. This reduces us to the consideration of its proofs, as the only relevant inquiry that we have to do with. Doubtless every objection against these proofs must be entertained, and satisfactorily disposed of. But this is different from objections against the subject-matter of a revelation. These form what are here called its internal improbabilities, much insisted on by Deists ; but all proceeding on the competency of the human understanding to decide upon a topic which is here shown to be much too high for it—we being no more judges beforehand of what a revelation ought to be, either in the way it ought to be conducted or what it should contain, than we are judges anterior to experience of what ought to be the course of nature. The alleged imperfections and anomalies in the methods by

which Christianity distributed and gave forth her lessons, are most effectually met by the analogous imperfections and anomalies, if such they must be called, as contrary to all the likelihoods of previous expectation, that might be observed in the gifts and teaching of nature.

12. It is thus that he demonstrates the invalidity of objections against the subject-matter of Christianity, while he admits that objections against its proofs were quite fatal to the authority of that religion, could they only be made good—as, for example, could it be shown that there was an infirmity in the evidence for its miracles, or a failure in its prophecies, or even a flaw and blemish in its morality, or, he might have added, an inconsistency between its averments and previously known truth. We think him particularly effectual in his vindication of the Scripture morality, when he combats the exceptions which have been alleged against it on the ground of an apparent approval given by it to crimes—as the spoiling of the Egyptians by the commandment of God, and the extermination of the Canaanites. But for the Divine commandment, they certainly would have been crimes; while with that commandment, they are no more to be regarded as such than the fines or the capital punishments inflicted by a court of justice should be regarded as examples either of theft or murder. In these instances the Israelites were but the executioners of a sentence; and to charge immorality on the procedure, is to confound the administrative acts of a government with its laws.

13. The question may be here put, What would have been our condition had the moral and the miraculous evidence for Christianity run counter to each other? It is somewhat analogous to a puzzle in ethical science, which meets and perplexes its disciples in the discussion of its elementary principles. It is the general sentiment of moralists, and we think a sound one, that virtue has an independent rightness of its own, apart from all consideration of the will of God; yet this might not prevent the inquiry, What would have been our obligation had it so happened that the Deity had come forth with an authori-

tative enactment on the side of all that conscience tells us to be wrong, and in opposition to all that the same conscience tells us to be right? It is well that the miraculous and the moral have not thus come into collision with each other, any more than the miraculous and the mathematical have come into collision. We should have been in a sad dilemma had a professed messenger from the upper sanctuary appeared upon earth, and after authenticating his commission by a miracle, had prescribed to us a moral code which reversed, we shall imagine, all the enactments of the decalogue; and we should have been in the like dilemma had he affirmed to be true what we knew, on the competent evidence whether of sense or reason, to be false. Let us rejoice that, in the economy under which we sit, no perplexity of this sort has ever been realized; that Christianity, whenever it touches on things experimental, will bear to be confronted with experience; and whenever it touches on things ethical or moral, is found to be at one with the lessons of purest and most enlightened virtue, and that to such a degree as not only to stand disencumbered from all objection upon this score, but to such a degree as to have founded a strong positive evidence in its favour, on that wisdom and that righteousness by which its whole system is throughout characterized. The perfection of its morality forms one of the brightest insignia of its divinity and truth.

14. The analogical reasoning of this chapter is all-triumphant when applied to the vindication of Christianity, notwithstanding the charge of its not being universal, or of its slow progress in the world, or of the difficulty and labour which attend the inquiry into its evidences, so as to be satisfied of its truth. The same impediments and the same limitations obtain in regard to the light of natural knowledge, and that, too, in things so important as remedies against otherwise fatal disease, and the most useful discoveries in science.

CHAPTER IV.

OF CHRISTIANITY, CONSIDERED AS A SCHEME OR CONSTITUTION,
IMPERFECTLY COMPREHENDED.

THE PRAYER.

WE approach Thee, O Lord, as the God and Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We rejoice that in Him there is full acceptance, and that also through Him strength is made to descend on us for all right and holy obedience. We feel that in Him all our sufficiency lies—that without Christ we can do nothing, and that but for the Spirit, which is at His giving, there is no good thing either in our hearts or in our history. May He begin a good work in our souls—may He carry it forward to perfection, that advancing from one degree of moral and spiritual excellence to another, we may at length be found prepared for the joys and the exercises of a blissful eternity.

15. It were great and unwarrantable presumption to decide on the personal Christianity of Butler; but I may at least remark on the possibility, nay, I would even go so far as to say, the frequency of men able and accomplished, and zealous for the general defence of Christianity, being at the same time meagre and vague in their views of its subject-matter. I might state it as my impression of our great author, that when he does offer his own representations on the form and economy of that dispensation under which we sit, he seems to me as if not prepared to state the doctrines of our faith in all that depth and peculiarity wherewith they are rendered in the New Testament. That man achieves a great service who, by strengthening the outworks of our Zion, places her in greater security from the assaults of the enemy without; but that man, I would say, achieves a higher service who can unfold to the friends and disciples who are within, the glories of the inner temple. Now I will say of Butler, that he appears more fitted for the former than for the latter of these achievements. I would trust him more on the question who the let-

ter comes from, than I would on the question what the letter says; and I do exceedingly fear, that living, as he did, at a period when a blight had descended on the Church of England, at a time when rationality was vigorous, but piety was languid and cold, at a time when there had been a strong revulsion from the zeal, and the devotedness, and withal the occasional excesses of Puritanism—I do fear, I say, that this illustrious defender of the repository which held the truth, would have but inadequately expounded in all its richness and personal application the truth itself. I think it but fair to warn you, that up and down throughout the volume, there do occur the symptoms of a heart not thoroughly evangelized, of a shortness and a laxity in his doctrinal religion, of a disposition perhaps to nauseate as fanatical those profound impressions of human depravity and the need of a Saviour, and the virtue of His atoning sacrifice, and the utter helplessness of man without the Spirit of God, not to reform merely but to renew, not to amend but to regenerate, not to fan into vitality the latent sparks of virtue and goodness which may be supposed originally to reside in the human constitution, but to quicken him from his state of death in trespasses and sins, so that from a child of the world he may be transformed into one of the children of light, who aforesaid alive only to the things of sense, becomes now alive to the things of faith—alive to God. There is nothing I feel less disposed to exercise than the office of a jealous or illiberal inquisitor upon one who has wielded so high the polemic arm in the battle of the faith. But I would caution you, when I meet with such an expression as that of the Holy Ghost given to good men,* against the delusion of this preternatural aid being only given for the purpose of helping further onward those who have previously, and by dint of their own independent exertions, so far helped themselves. I would have you to understand that the intervention of this heavenly agent is the outset of conversion, and accompanies all the stages of it. He is not only given in larger measure to good men, but He makes men good. He is not only given to those who

* See last line in p. 205.—Fitzgerald's Edition.

obey Him, but He makes a willing and an obedient people in the day of His power. He is present at the incipient as well as at the subsequent movements of the religious life, acting on men in the lowest depths of their alienation from God, and conferring both a significance and a fulfilment on the prayer of—"Turn me, O God, and I shall be turned."

16. At the same time I know not a more important lesson that can be urged from the pulpit, than that which flows from the relation between the Holy Spirit and those who are the subjects of His influence. When Butler speaks of this influence as given to good men, it may be necessary to pause a little ere we have settled the full orthodoxy of the question; but after this has been done, we are not aware of a more momentous truth than that which lies involved in the assertion of our great author. If by His being given to good men, it be understood that He descends in larger measure and brighter manifestation on those who have made a faithful and a conscientious use of His blessed influences, there cannot be a juster and sounder affirmation, or one that bears more importantly on the interests of practical religion. You are familiar with the idea that the effect of God working in us is just to set us a-working—that when He addresses Himself to the object of putting a human being into a right state of character and operation, He does so without violence to any of the powers or principles of the human constitution—that He gives clearness to the understanding, and sensibility to the conscience, and rectitude to the will, and strength to the practical determinations, and effect to that whole process of thought, and sentiment, and reason, which connects the first feeble desires with the ultimate and the finished doings of righteousness—so that really this creature, subjected though he has been to an influence without him and above him, not only looks, but really is in every way as active and spontaneous and busy and hard-working a disciple as if no special interposition on the part of any high and heavenly agent had been required. Now we know not how far back a decided visitation of this sort may have commenced, but we may at least appeal to the experience of every man who breathes,

that alienated though he be from the life and the light of Christianity, he can at least do something, and that his conscience, under all its present oblivion, has not left him wholly without direction as to the right and the wrong. We know not how far back in the movements either of remorse for the evil, or of desire towards the good in the character, we may recognise the first embryo aspirations after Christianity, or even Christianity itself in its incipient and rudimental form. The Apostolical direction to an already advanced and confirmed Christian of—"Stir up the gift that is in thee," is applicable to one and all within the reach of our voice. There is a certain degree of light, there is a certain measure of strength, for the right use of which every individual is responsible, and to whom the declaration of Scripture is applicable—"That to him who hath more shall be given, and that from him who hath not shall be taken away that which he hath." By a faithful and conscientious application of all that we do know, we work our way, as it were, to a revelation of what we at present do not know. By a right exercise of the strength that we do possess, we are nurtured into more strength, and that not merely under the influence of habit as made known to us by experience, but under the influence of the Spirit, as made known to us in Scripture. He in fact is represented there as a personal agent, whose office it is to conduct us onward from one degree of grace and virtue to another, and whose nature it is to feel affected by the treatment that we give Him, whether of welcome or of resistance. He is invited by the one; He is grieved and discouraged by the other. He strives, but will not strive continually. If we persevere in our opposition, He in fine lets us alone, and at last quenched by our obstinacy, He takes irrevocable leave of us. This is the peculiar economy made known to us in Scripture; and you will at once perceive how, with a thorough recognition of the part which the Spirit of God has in the work of our progressive holiness, it secures the entire practical character of urgency and moral suasion in all our addresses to the spirit of man. It connects the supply and enlargement of future influence with the use that we make of

present influence—it lays upon us the present and the perpetual obligation of stirring up all that is actually within us, at every given instant, to the work of obedience. And when, along with this, we recollect that it is not by a mechanical but by a moral necessity that He operates—that He addresses Himself to man as man, and instead of working *against*, works altogether *by* the powers and the principles of our spontaneous nature, there cannot be imagined a system under which, when rightly understood and proceeded on, man is more put on the strenuous exertion of all the activities which belong to him.

17. When thus viewed, you will perceive that the further back you carry the work of the Spirit in the history of conversion, the further back do you carry along with it the urgency and the power of the considerations which we are now insisting on. Grant that He originates as well as advances and carries forward our Christianity, this is but saying that He is the author of the first and the faintest motions towards what is good, as well as of those more decided aspects and tendencies which take place afterwards in the progress of this discipleship; or, in other words, wherever such motions are to be found, you can bring the same impressive argument to bear upon them. Obey them, and they will be followed up by higher visitations. Stifle them, and even they will subside into acquiescence, and you will lapse into that most hopeless of all states, a state of immovable lethargy and unconcern. The orthodoxy which inclines to carry furthest back the doctrine of a spiritual influence, so as to make that influence the source and commencement of the whole, just leads us to carry as far back the moral or the hortatory lesson that is founded thereupon. Instead of chilling man into inaction, it gives a more decidedly practical outset to his Christianity, and this is another instance of the union which I should like if I could make as clearly palpable as may be to the eye of every understanding, the union between the soundly dogmatic in the principles of theology, and the freely and urgently hortative in its practical lessons.

CHAPTER V.

OF THE PARTICULAR SYSTEM OF CHRISTIANITY ; THE APPOINTMENT
OF A MEDIATOR, AND THE REDEMPTION OF THE WORLD BY HIM.

THE PRAYER.

O God, Thou art emphatically the Being with whom we have to do ; and how sad then the thought, that, in the vast multiplicity of our doings, Thou art so seldom and so little thought of ! Give us to feel the burden of our alienation from Thyself. Reclaim us from the deep ungodliness of nature ; and whereas in time past we have been dead to Thee and alive to the world, may we henceforth die to the world and become alive to God. Naturally we stand afar off from the Father of our spirits. May we be brought nigh through Him who died the just for the unjust. For His sake, forgive our innumerable offences, and receive us graciously, and love us freely. All we ask is in the name of Christ. Amen.

18. The sufferings of one person are often the medium of procuring benefits for others. The painful consequences of our actions are sometimes removed, either in the course of nature, or by the interposition of others. Here is an indication, first of severity, and then of compassion on the part of God ; and it furnishes an analogy between the system of nature and that of revelation. This analogy does away *objections* to the mediation of Christ ; but our *proof* of it comes from revelation. The Socinian merges all the attributes of God into modifications of benevolence ; but there will be misgivings of conscience, in spite of his sentimental representations of the Deity. The hope of the Christian is one that can bear to be confronted with the whole unmutilated character of God, without being obliged to put any of His attributes into the background. There is a difference between goodness and compassion ; goodness may be regarded as the genus comprehending mercy, and compassion as species. The object of *compassion* is *misery* ; the object of *mercy* is *guilt*. The Socinians wish to make truth, justice, and the other attributes of mercy, to be modifications

of benevolence too ; but the atonement is a great impregnable argument on the side of the orthodox system.

19. Butler says, very properly, that the necessity of an atonement arises from the universal ruin of the world. He disproves of certain speculative objections, such as whether any other way of mediation could have been devised—and what would have been the fate of the better sort of men, if Christ had not come into the world. He refuses to entertain such questions, observing that we do not know the whole of the matter. I do think, however, that he blinks the question of the obvious meaning of the sacrifice. He confines himself to generalities of expression, with the apparent view of shunning the specific import of Christ's death being a sacrifice for sin. He admits the scriptural statement ; but I do have the feeling of an inclination on his part to slur over the obvious sense and meaning of the statement. I should not like to bear hard upon our inestimable author, but I may at least take this occasion of adverting for a few moments to a habit of those who call themselves Rationalists in theology. They profess that their taste is for what is plain and lucid in theology, and along with this they profess an utter loathing for mystery : hence their relish for the plainly moral and devotional pieces in the volume of inspiration, such as the Psalms or the Proverbs ; hence their preference of the preceptive to the doctrinal parts of Scripture, their liking for the gospels, their aversion to most of the epistles of the New Testament.

20. It were well if we could settle in our own minds what is meant by the mysteriousness of a thing, and how it is that the mysteriousness is dissipated. I beg you will advert to the distinction which there is between a proposition and the reason of a proposition. The one may be clearly understood, while the other lies in profoundest secrecy from our view. In this case the proposition will still continue to be termed mysterious, and that you will observe, though the meaning of it be clearly comprehended, is just because the reason of it is not comprehended. The thing stated may be understood as a fact, but not understood in connexion with its principle. Now, at-

tend to what that is which you precisely gain, after all, by the discovery of a principle, or by the discovery of that, the knowledge of which is thought to do away the mysteriousness in question. Take any fact in nature for an example, the mind may be fully satisfied as to the reality of the fact, but utterly in the dark as to the reason of it. There is a mystery connected with it because of this, and there occur to us two ways in which the feeling of mystery might be done away: first, let me suppose the fact to be an observed sequence, as that when A is presented C is continually sure to follow. There can be no misunderstanding the statement of this fact, and it is conceivable that it may have the utmost degree of observational evidence in its favour. The reality of the connexion between A and C may be abundantly made sure to us; but we want to know the reason of the connexion, or what the ligament is that binds these two terms so invariably together. Perhaps then on a closer observation we may discover something intermediate between A and C that will reveal to us the ligament; we may find that B occurs betwixt the two, and forms in fact a stepping-stone from the one to the other. The mind is regaled by such a discovery. It has found out the modus of a connexion that was before inexplicable. The reason why A is followed by C is conceived to be because of the intervention of B, in which explanation of the phenomenon it may perhaps acquiesce and be satisfied.

21. But the curiosity of some is not so easily appeased, nor is their appetency for the reasons of things so soon satisfied. The question, why is A followed up by C may be followed by the equally reasonable and pertinent question, why is A followed up by B? The connexion between A and C was felt to be mysterious till the intermediate B was discovered; but we mistake the matter, if we yet think that the mysteriousness is chased away—for both the connexion between A and B and that between B and C may be still felt to be alike mysterious.

22. To get rid of this feeling, we may address ourselves to the new task of ascertaining the ligament between A and B, and we may either succeed or fail in it. If we succeed, the

mysteriousness of the connexion between A and B is now cleared away ; but how ? just by the interposition of another term, just by the manner in which the mysteriousness of the connexion between A and C was cleared away, just by the discovery of a before hidden and intermediate fact lying between A and B, just, in short, by a something which may leave the spirit of inquiry as restless and unsatiated as ever ; for still there is room for the question, whence the connexion between the prior term A and this new interpolated mean in the series of causation ? or whence the connexion between this mean and the posterior term B ?

23. All this has been well unfolded by the masterly hand of Dr. Thomas Brown, and he grafts upon it what I have no hesitation in pronouncing to be the wisest and the weightiest philosophical aphorism that was ever framed, and as solid as it is profound, that "either nothing is mysterious, or everything is mysterious." Now I would have you observe how differently it is that two distinct classes of people in mind and intellect are affected by this contemplation : the one set, resting all their convictions in the realities of fact and phenomena and observational evidence ; the other never resting, but haunted by the feeling of a mysteriousness which, with their utmost efforts, they can never chase away. The former, satisfied by observation, believe in the reality of the sequence between A and C ; the latter perhaps almost suspending their belief in its reality till they have discovered the reason of it. I dispute not the use of the principle by which the latter are actuated. It may have been the impellent force which led to the discovery both of B and of the still more hidden intermediate term, and may even lead to further discoveries in the series.

CHAPTER VI.

OF THE WANT OF UNIVERSALITY IN REVELATION ; AND OF THE SUPPOSED DEFICIENCY IN THE PROOF OF IT.

THE PRAYER.

IN Thy light, O God, may we clearly see light. Give us to recognise in the Book of Thy counsel the impress which Thou hast there given of Thyself. Enable us to discern the truth, and the holiness, and the majesty, and all the other high characteristics of the Divinity which are stamped upon its pages. We rejoice and are convinced by its precious adaptations to the wants of our moral nature. Enable us to verify it still more by the experience of having had all those wants satisfied. May our willingness to do Thy will conduct us to the knowledge of Christ's doctrine, as having come indeed from God.

24. One great lesson of Butler's "Analogy" is the propriety of conforming ourselves to the actual state of the circumstances in which we are placed. One evidence which the early Christians had in larger measure than we, was derived from the lives of the early professors, which shone with a much brighter lustre than in our day. Any deficiency in the evidence of revelation will be made up by the fulfilment of prophecy, and we trust also by the exemplary lives of Christians.

25. The statement of Butler, that people will be judged according to the light they have received, is just ; but it has been perverted to the object of nullifying the importance of religious light, and is a sentiment which we have often heard applied in opposition to missionary enterprises, and which, if just in an argument against these, would be alike just against the mission of the Apostles, nay, against the mission of Christ Himself to the world.

26. Objections to the evidence of Christianity, as not being obvious, are met by saying that the Christian dispensation is one of trial ; and that this obscurity may be part of the probation. Man's dissatisfaction with Christianity does not always

arise from want of evidence ; but from his not setting himself earnestly and rightly to seek it. The unbelief of such inquirers resolves itself into carelessness and want of inquiry.

CHAPTER VII.

OF THE PARTICULAR EVIDENCE FOR CHRISTIANITY.

THE PRAYER.

WE bless Thee, O God, that with signs, and wonders, and divers miracles, Thou didst usher into the world the message of its salvation. We rejoice in thinking that the God of nature, and who made such visible assertion of His supremacy over all its processes, is the author of our Christianity. We bless Thee for the evidences of our faith, for the ample means which Thou hast afforded us for giving to every man a reason for the hope that is in us, for the light that shines around the history of the gospel, and above all, for that surpassing light which, radiating from the gospel itself, shines into the hearts of those who believe. May we give earnest heed to the word of this testimony, and persevere therein till the day dawn and the day-star arise in our hearts.

27. At the place where we now find ourselves Butler makes a transition in his argument : he passes from the subject-matter of Christianity to its evidence. He has hitherto been employed in removing the objections against Christianity itself by the argument of analogy, and by the same engine he now proceeds to remove the objections that may be levelled against the proof of it. The two objects are altogether distinct. By succeeding in the one he may have said nothing which can positively recommend Christianity to our acceptance ; but he does a great deal, if, by nullifying the objections of adversaries, he simply places it in a midway condition, between the negative and the affirmative, and therefore open to a favourable impulse from any argument which might be alleged in its favour. It is a great matter to relieve the subject from the burden of any disproof which may be conceived to lie upon it, after having done

which, it may still remain in the state of not proven—nay, in such a state of absolute neutrality, that not the slightest probability may have yet been alleged in its behalf. But it is well that it should be brought into such a state as that the very slightest probability will tell. And now having accomplished his task thus far, he proceeds, in the chapter before us, after having met by analogy the objections which are levelled against the contents of Christianity, to meet, by the same weapon of repulse, the objections which are levelled against its credentials.

28. In the discharge of this second service, he is not called upon to propound very fully, or in the way of positive vindication, the evidences of Christianity. He adverts to them; he states what they are; he even renders a passing homage to their authority and force; but his proper task is to do by them what he had before done by the subject-matter of revelation, that is, clear away the objections, not now against the doctrine of Christianity, but against the proof of it, and that by showing that the similar or analogous objections in other cases are not admitted to have the validity which, in the case of the evangelical story, the opponents of the gospel would fain allow to them. By accomplishing the first service, he disencumbers Christianity of objections, and brings it into a free state for the application of the proof; by the accomplishment of the second service, he disencumbers the proof itself of its objections, and leaves it to its own proper and positive force in the upholding of Christianity. His argument does not call upon him to offer any absolute computation of this force; this will be done by Dr. Paley in our next text-book, which will follow in the most orderly succession that can well be imagined after the great preliminary service which is rendered by Bishop Butler.

CHAPTER VIII.

OF THE OBJECTIONS WHICH MAY BE MADE AGAINST ARGUING FROM
THE ANALOGY OF NATURE TO RELIGION.

THE PRAYER.

WE bless Thee, O God, that after having, at divers times and in sundry manners, spoken to them of old time by the prophets, Thou hast at length spoken to us by Thine own Son. And we further bless Thee, that after Thy Son had left the world, He left not the world without a witness, but that He left the word of His testimony and the promise of His Spirit for the guidance of all future generations. May we give earnest heed thereto, and not cease the busy application of all our faculties to the revelation of Thy will till the day dawn and the day-star arise in our hearts. May the growing evidence of the Bible be to us as the shining light which shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

29. A position, whether it relates to a doctrine or a matter of fact, admits of all gradations in regard to the state of its credibility. In the first place, there may be positive reasons for believing that it is not true, in which case it may be regarded as in a minus state with regard to its credibility. There is evidence on the question whether the position be true or not, and this evidence is against it, requiring, therefore, an equal force of evidence on the opposite side to neutralize it, and a still greater degree to overbalance it, so as to give a positive impression in its favour.

30. Or, which is quite a different state in regard to the question of a thing's credibility from the former, there may be no reason either for or against the truth of a given proposition, nothing which may incline us to one or other side of a question, placing it, therefore, neither in a plus nor minus condition in regard to evidence, but just on the line of demarcation between them. I would say of a proposition when thus situated, that it was in a state of zero. In reference to my knowledge, a pro-

position like this, that Cicero was above the middle size, is precisely in such a state, and countless other things of the same sort can be specified. It is obvious that in this state of any proposition there is nothing to neutralize, nothing either to countervail or to get the better of; and that for the object of advancing it to the rank of a probability, it lies open to the smallest proof or presumption on the positive side of the question.

31. Now I hold it to be the achievement of a very great service in behalf of any doctrine if you can transfer it from the first to the second state now specified—if from its station on the minus side you can place it on the line of demarcation; although you bring it not over to the plus or positive side, you in this way secure its full strength and benefit to the positive argument—you as yet supply no proof, but you nullify all disproof; and, placing the balance on an even scale, you lay it open to an inclination on the favourable side by the least force which can possibly be applied to it. This I hold to have been the main service of Butler in the treatise which we are now on the eve of finishing. To avail ourselves of an expression in this chapter, although the analogies which he instances do not contribute one iota of proof to the establishment of anything as true, they do a very great deal if they establish that, for aught we know, they may be true. The doctrine, for example, of punishment hereafter for misconduct here, is, at the very least, susceptible of being proved thus far by analogy; that perhaps it may, for aught we know, be true, although we are in possession of no such analogies as can enable us to prove that it is true. It goes most completely to neutralize any disbelief that may be alleged against the doctrine on the ground of its inconsistency with the character of God, when you can allege, that under the government of that God the very same thing—of misconduct being followed at longer or shorter intervals by suffering—takes place in the course of experience. That it happens here may not be a sufficient reason that it shall happen there, but a most sufficient reason that it may happen there. The analogy has taken this proposition out of the class of unlikelihoods; and even though it should not have transferred

it to the opposite class of likelihoods, it is a great thing if it should only have placed it in a state of indifference, whence it may be made to ascend in the scale by the force of other conclusions and other arguments. But Butler claims more in the way of virtue for his argument than this; and let us now therefore endeavour to appreciate the validity of the claim.

32. In the first place, I would have you understand how it says nothing for the power of analogy to furnish a positive argument on the side of Christianity that it is applicable, not merely to the removal of objections against Christianity itself, but also to the removal of objections against the proof of Christianity. After having accomplished the former service, it leaves the subject in a state of indifference, which is far better, certainly, than a state of discredit; but after having accomplished the latter service, it leaves Christianity in a state of positive credit. But it is not analogy, you will observe, which puts it into this positive state. In this state it has been put solely by the positive argument; and all which analogy does is to uphold the native power of this argument by warding off the adverse forces that have been brought to bear against it. The last of its two services might delude some into the imagination that analogy contributes something to the stock of affirmative reasons for Christianity. I should be very cautious of asserting this; but it at least repels the inroad of any such invader as might offer to take away this stock or any part of it. I wish not to overstate its power, as, I think, has been occasionally done by Butler in some incidental expressions that occur here and there in the volume, and yet I feel that I cannot render sufficient homage to the argument which first, addressing itself to the subject-matter of Christianity, relieves it of all disproof, and pronounces it worthy of a trial, and then, addressing itself to the evidence of Christianity, relieves it of all objection, and so makes good to this evidence the undisturbed possession of all the entireness and efficiency which natively belong to it.

33. The objections removable from the Christian religion by the power of analogy are such as affirm certain parts of it to be incredible, whether considered as facts or considered as making

against the moral attributes of God. The first set of objections are set aside by the exhibition of similar facts in the constitution and course of nature ; and the second set of objections are set aside by evincing that they hold equally good against the system of natural religion. He seeks no absolute solution of these objections. He only shows that they equally lie against the natural economy of things, which economy, then, if consistent either with the natural or the moral government of the world, proves that, for aught of force which is in these objections, the author of this economy of nature may indeed be the author of the economy of revelation also.

34. Let me repeat once more, that I doubt if analogy can go further than simply neutralize objections, whether against the substance of Christianity or against the proof of it. Her office I hold to be entirely a defensive one. Under her power every honest inquirer will abandon the region of disbelief, and take his station at the margin which separates this region from its opposite. It is by means of other implements and other influences that he will be led to enter on the region of positive conviction.

35. There are certain other objections incidentally noticed by our great author, and which cannot be met by his peculiar argument. They do not lie within the scope of analogy, and if grounded on truth, it would not be in the power of an analogical argument at all to make head against them. Any obvious and flagrant immorality in the system of Christianity, or any distinct contradiction between one part of it and another, or any assertion by it relative to the things of nature and history, and which I know from previous and independent knowledge to be false—these would outweigh the force of all its evidences, and justify men in setting it aside as a hateful and wicked imposture. Such objections require a direct treatment on their own proper ground ; and it was of these I spoke when I called your attention to the highly important result that issues from the argument which is held regarding them.

CONCLUSION.

THE PRAYER.

WE draw near to Thee, O God, under a deep sense both of our dependence as creatures and of our unworthiness as sinners. Yet sinners though we be, we draw near not without hope, but rather with full assurance of heart in the blood of the everlasting covenant. We obey the invitations of Thy gospel, we plead its assurances, and build our confidence before Thee on the exceeding great and precious promises of Thy word. We pray for mercy to pardon, we pray for grace to help us. May the blood which cleanseth from all sin, cleanse us from our sin; and may the Spirit which quickens even the dead in trespasses, quicken us into a new moral and spiritual existence.

36. I shall be strictly observant of my promise to expatiate no more on the substance or contents of the volume which we have now traversed; but let me not take leave of it without expressing my hope that many of you have imbibed, along the passage, the sound and philosophical spirit of its great author. I have already given repeated intimation that, viewed as a Christian composition, I do not regard it as being sufficiently impregnated with the *sal evangelicum*, and that even his own principles are not fully and practically followed out. He is like one who, with admirable skill, lays down the distances and directions of a land which himself hath not travelled far into. The wisdom of Butler is more like the wisdom of the letter than the wisdom of the Spirit; yet let us never forget, that it is the letter, animated and lighted up by the Spirit, which constitutes the *palubulum* of Christian instruction. The Spirit in revealing truth to the mind, reveals to it nothing that is beside or beyond the record; still it is Bible instruction that we receive even under the teaching of the Spirit, though, if I may so express myself, it is the Bible in illuminated characters. Spiritual Christianity takes the very shape and dimensions and outline and whole structure of literal Christianity. The lessons of the Spirit are but the lessons of the word made impressive, or of the word

brought clearly and powerfully home ; and without sitting in judgment on the personal religion of Butler, it is the part of the Christian world to own their deepest obligations to the man who hath so nobly asserted the authority of that word over all the darkling speculations of human fancy, and who hath evinced to us, by the truest of all philosophy, that we should cast down every lofty imagination, and bring all our thoughts into the captivity of its obedience.

37. The service which Bacon rendered to science, that service hath Butler rendered to Christianity. The former succeeded in nullifying the pride and the presumption of all human excogitations respecting the natural constitution of the universe, and reduced the work of discovery in things of science to the business of observation ; the latter hath, with like success, demonstrated the vanity of man's preconceptions respecting the moral constitution of the universe, and reduced the work of discovery in things sacred to the business of observation also. If rightly tutored by the one, we go forth with the plumb-line, and the balance, and the crucible, and the telescope, and all the apparatus of experiment, on the observation of nature ; if rightly tutored by the other, we go forth with the grammar, and the lexicon, and the polyglot, and all the apparatus of criticism, on the observation of Scripture. In the first enterprise we patiently collect the facts of what God hath done in the world, and out of these we build up the entire system of our philosophy ; in the second enterprise we patiently collect the facts of what God hath written in the Bible, and out of these we build up the entire system of our faith. There is an identity of spirit and principle in the two processes, and whether they be the works of God or the word of God that we investigate, it is alike the lesson of those great masters that we evince the truest wisdom by sitting down to the task with the docility of little children. And whatever the disposition may be in the philosophers of our present age towards Christianity, the days have been when the men of most colossal strength and proudest achievement in science pressed forward to do her reverence, as when Newton transferred his mighty

intellect from the study of the works of God to the study of His word.

38. And now that we have made full trial of one book, and actually finished it, I leave the question to yourselves as to the best method of learning theology—whether from a succession of lectures alone, or from a succession of text-books supplemented by lectures, and mixed up with the familiar remarks and urgent reiterations of an expounder—reiterations persevered in till every misconception be rectified, and all resistance be driven in? I ask in which of the two ways you can be made to drink more deeply into the existent literature of a science, or have a compact and memorable impression of its truths effectually wrought upon you? Is there any comparison between the efficiency of the methods, whether the object be to multiply the lessons of the course or to revise them? Do you not experience that, in the one way, the instruction is far more abundant, in its quantity, as well as far more enduring in the fruits of it? and that by a series of actual deliverances on every topic, whether direct or incidental, which occurs in the volume, you are not only rendered masters of the book, but masters of the subject of the book? And we speak not merely of the effect it must have on the cast and habitude of your own thoughts by being brought into collision with authors of such staple as Butler and Paley, we speak of the virtue that lies in your own preparations—we speak of your abridgments and your analyses and your written memoranda, these substantial products of your own well-exercised intellects; and while we appeal to all this palpable handiwork as the enduring memorial of your industry, we confidently ask whether, in the actual moulding of your conceptions on the matters of Christianity, there be not effects which, though by their nature unseen, are alike enduring?

39. Were my own conceptions on the subject of a theological seminary realized, there would be distinct classes for the students of each year, in which case the whole number would be broken up into forties or fifties, and the examinational process would circulate with far greater rapidity, so as to complete the

rotation somewhat oftener than once in the fortnight. The charm and efficacy of the method would thus be brought out in far more convincing illustration ; but even as it is, and without the advantage of this division, your own appearances have fully vindicated the course that we have taken ; and from the highly intellectual exhibitions which many of you have made, I feel abundantly encouraged and warranted to persevere in it.

40. In one respect you will find Paley less laborious than Butler, and in another respect more so. You will have to prepare a greater quantity of the latter ; but then, in the description of his lucid pages, you will experience the facility and even the entertainment of light reading. Let me recommend that you give a portion of each evening in the week to your preparations, if you find that the space traversed by the three days' examinations actually require it. Above all, let me recommend the construction of an ample note-book, grounded on this inestimable work, and leaving space in it for our own supplementary observations. Remember that we are now entering on the positive evidence for Christianity, and you will find it a precious acquisition to have a manuscript written by your own hands, presenting the outline of this very extensive argument, with notices of the authors who have most signalized themselves by the contributions which they have made to it.

LECTURES

ON

PALEY'S EVIDENCES OF CHRISTIANITY.

LECTURES

ON

PALEY'S EVIDENCES OF CHRISTIANITY.

IN entering upon this work, let me apprise you that notwithstanding the generality of its title, "A View of the Evidences of Christianity," you are not to expect from it more than a complete argument on one branch of these evidences—the historical. Of this, however, he has given a most satisfactory compend, the best I do think in this or perhaps in any other language. The most imperfect division of his Treatise is that which is taken up with the internal evidence, and he is brief and meagre on the subject of prophecy. On the whole, however, it is the best text-book I know for a theological class on the subject of the Christian Evidences; and we shall endeavour as best we can to supplement the deficiencies of those parts which one should have liked that the author had somewhat more extended.*

* [The greater number of these supplementary observations which, in the course of his readings and examinations upon the text-book, Dr. Chalmers offered to his students, have either been amalgamated with his own earlier Treatise on the Evidences, and are to be found in the third and fourth volume of his Works, or are embodied in that section of the "Institutes of Theology" which is devoted to this subject. The following fragments which remain, have been thought worthy of being preserved.—W. H.]

PART I.—PROP. I.—CHAP. IX.—SECT. V.

THE SCRIPTURES WERE PUBLICLY READ AND EXPOUNDED IN THE
RELIGIOUS ASSEMBLIES OF THE EARLY CHRISTIANS.

THE PRAYER.

WE bless Thee, O God, that Thou hast called us both to a reasonable faith and to a reasonable service. Enable us to attain to the one, and to execute the other. Thou hast supplied us with abundant light and evidence for the first: Thou hast supplied us with abundant strength and meetness for the second. By the aids of Thy Spirit, O God, may we be conducted both to a right belief and to a right obedience. And more especially, having ascertained that Christ is indeed the Son of God, and the messenger from His throne, may we sit at His feet with the confidence and the docility of little children.

JUSTIN MARTYR, writing in the year 140, says, "The Memoirs of the Apostles," which he elsewhere calls *Gospels*, "or the writings of the Prophets, are read according as the time allows; and, when the reader has ended, the president makes a discourse, exhorting to the imitation of so excellent things." This is a strong warrant for preaching, as we shall take occasion to explain. It has been represented as a superseding of the Divine wisdom by human words. That the Scriptures were publicly expounded, as well as read, is proved by the fact, that when Origen went into Palestine, A.D. 216, he was requested to discourse and expound the Scriptures publicly in the Church. "This," says Origen, "we do, when the Scriptures are read in the Church; and when the discourse for explication is delivered to the people." Specimens of some of these commentaries on the New Testament, called "Homilies," publicly delivered by Origen, still remain. The word "homily" was formerly understood differently from its present acceptation. It then meant an address spoken to the people, (*concio ad populum*;) it now means what an exegesis does in Latin—a discourse, the object of which is to discuss a thesis or proposition in theology. The homilies of Origen do not appear to deserve the title of dis-

courses to the people. They are rather argumentative than hortatory; and are tinged with much of the mysticism for which their author was peculiar.

Twenty years after Origen, Cyprian gives an account of his having ordained two persons, who had before been confessors, to be readers. When he mentions "confessors," we are not to suppose that he meant persons appointed to confess the people, according to the practice of Roman Catholics. They were persons who had themselves confessed Christianity at the hazard of their lives, and were, therefore, appointed to stations of honour in the Church. "Nothing," says Cyprian, "can be more fit than that he who has made a glorious confession of the Lord should read publicly in the Church—that he who has shown himself willing to die a martyr, should read the gospel of Christ, by which martyrs are made." Augustine, among many others, testifies to the public reading of the Scriptures in the churches—"where is a confluence of all sorts of people, of both sexes, and where they hear how they ought to live well in this world, that they may deserve to live happily and eternally in another." The only other books which appear to have been read in churches (and those only in a part of the latter) were the "Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians," and the "Shepherd of Hermas," which, though inferior to the canonical Scriptures, were the genuine writings of apostolic men.

The early and immemorial practice in the Christian Church of discoursing from a text or passage of Scripture, should not be lost sight of in the discussion of the very interesting question which relates to this subject—the question between the respective merits of reading the Word and preaching from the Word. Is not, it may be asked with a great appearance of plausibility—is not a substitution of the latter for the former, a substitution of man's wisdom for God's wisdom? Is it not the creature taking up a theme on which the Creator has already given a deliverance—as if from his mouth it could be propounded with greater effect than from the mouth of the Eternal?

Is not the usual Sabbath address from the pulpit of a half-minute text, with a half-hour sermon, a complete overlaying of that which is Divine by that which is human, and abandoning the *ipsissima verba* of inspiration for such thoughts as the minister may conceive, and such language as he may choose to convey them in? There can be no doubt that the lesson, whatever it may be, is differently put by the minister in his preaching from what it is put by God in the Bible; and the question is, Is it better put, or if not, is not the practice, now almost universal, of the Scriptures giving place so much as they do to sermons, a matter of undoubted mischief and loss to the Christian world?

Now, our first brief reply to this question—for we have not time to expatiate fully on the topic—rests on the very same principle with that on which you may recollect that I have already offered to vindicate systematic theology. It is true that the minister has often to expound the meaning of a text, or, in other words, to make known the sense of the individual saying. But his main concern is with the relation of the saying both to other parts of Scripture and to the people who are before him. In propounding the first of these relations, he is rightly dividing the word of truth; in propounding the second of them, he is giving to every man a word in season. Now the execution of this twofold task necessarily lands him in a sermon, whereof the materials are the doctrine of the text, and the application of the text. While acquitting himself of this task, he is not setting aside the volume of revelation, but profoundly studying it, just as the philosopher is intently studying the volume of nature, when he either groups his phenomena into principles, or brings these principles to bear on some useful application. I cannot afford at present to urge any other than very general considerations, but I shall hold it enough if you perceive that sermonizing may be vindicated on the very principle on which systematizing may be vindicated—that all which we have already alleged in defence of the one may be alleged in defence of the other—that if systems be profitable, then, for the very same reasons, sermons

are profitable ; and, on the other hand, if we find it to have been the custom from the first ages of the Church, not merely to expound, but to expatiate on a passage, then this of itself forms a distinct argument additional to any we have yet used in favour of systematic theology.

But there is more than this to be said for sermons. When put by the side of bare scriptural readings, it looks very plausible to say, that instead of drawing direct from the parent fountain, it is drawing from it by means of a stream that has passed through a medium of infirmity and error, or that it is taking the truth at second hand, the light by reflexion, when we might have had it by a powerful and primary radiance. Now this is not exactly the case. It follows not that in passing through the hands of an expounder, it should pass through a medium of error and distortion. He, in fact, is supposed to take on a far juster impression of the Bible, in its special passages, than any of the people whom he instructs, and to give back—which, by his more correct and comprehensive view of the whole, he may do with perfect accuracy by means of appropriate language—this impression to them. And then here lies the mighty charm and efficacy of the human expounder : it comes to us mingled with the sympathy of human affections, and increased by the energy of the living voice. The way in which Scripture both touched and affected one of our own kindred nature, passes by utterance from his heart into ours ; and thus it is that there is no mode of conveyance more sanctioned both by Scripture example and by Scripture ordination for the lessons of Christianity, than that they should be made to pass from one human being to another. Cornelius might have been instructed by one angel, but two angels were sent from heaven, one to him and another to Peter ; and all to arrange a meeting betwixt man and man upon the subject, and that Cornelius should receive the truths whereby he and his house were to be saved from one that was flesh of his flesh and bone of his bone. There is a force in the sympathy of kindred natures whereof Christianity does avail itself. The great instruments of its propagation are not Bibles alone, but Bibles accompanied with

preachers. Men were commissioned to bear the tidings of the gospel through the world ; and we mistake the matter if we think not that within the limits of Christendom religion would speedily hasten to decay, if not to dissolution, were it not for the piety, and the earnestness, and the constant recurrence of those living appeals which come warm from the pulpits of the land. To graft an explanation and address upon a passage of Scripture seems to have been a practice in the synagogues of Judea, and was sanctioned by our Saviour Himself, who, after He had read a portion, was looked at by all the people in expectation of the customary address, and actually delivered one ; and, as far as tradition and testimony go, this has been a constant observance of the Church from the Apostolic ages. In a word, one of the great appointed influences for the spread and the preservation of the gospel lies in the application of Christianized intellect and feeling on the part of one man, and that with a view of assimilating to his own the intellects and the feelings of those who are around him. It is thus that truth, indeed, from the very first, instead of coming in a state of abstract separation from all human accompaniments, has been supplied to the world through the medium of prophets and holy men of God, and at length most touchingly and powerfully of all by God manifest in the flesh, who spoke to us on earth in the form and with all the sympathies of a man. The argument could be extended. It is a worthy, and yet to a certain extent an original theme. Should any of you attempt it, you will find that it subserves the vindication not merely of oral but of written expositions, and that it will lead you to estimate the good done not merely by those preachings on Scripture superadded to the readings of Scripture, which are delivered in the congregations, but the good done by the super-addition of the books of Christian authorship to the books of original inspiration.

PART I.—PROP. I.—CHAP. IX.—SECT. VII.

OUR SCRIPTURES WERE RECEIVED BY ANCIENT CHRISTIANS, OF DIFFERENT SECTS AND PERSUASIONS; BY MANY HERETICS AS WELL AS CATHOLICS; AND WERE USUALLY APPEALED TO BY BOTH SIDES, IN THE CONTROVERSIES WHICH AROSE IN THOSE DAYS.

THE PRAYER.

WE rejoice, O God, that amid the conflict and diversity of human speculations, Thou hast come forth with an overbearing light from heaven upon our lower world. May we live by the powers of a coming death, of a coming judgment, of a coming immortality. May we no longer live here as if here we were to live for ever. May we no longer put death at a distance, or defer the urgent work of a preparation for eternity; but, to-day, while it is called to-day, may we harden not our hearts. And grant that on every footstep of our pilgrimage, there may stand impressed the high character of a candidate for glory, immortality, and honour.

I think Paley wrong in saying that heretics bore only a small proportion to the whole Church. I think it will be found that they bore a very considerable proportion. The most extraordinary of them was Marcion, who flourished about the year 130, and who rejected the Old Testament, as proceeding from an inferior deity, and erased from the New Testament every passage which recognised the Jewish Scriptures. Yet he published an expurgated edition of Luke's Gospel, containing all the leading facts, and everything necessary to authenticate Christianity. Basilides had adopted similar views as early as the year 120, yet he received the Gospel of Matthew, and, for aught that appears, the other three, and wrote a commentary on the evangelical story, so copious as to be divided into twenty-four books. The three most ancient topics of controversy in the Christian Church were, the authority of the Jewish constitution, the origin of evil, and the nature of Christ. So early as the year 200 there were writers who, like the Socinians of our own day, contended for the mere humanity of Christ, yet all acknowledged the Scriptures. Dr. Lardner goes

through the list of heresies, and sums up the whole by observing, that those who espoused them "received most, or all the same books of the New Testament, which the Catholics"—or the general Christian Church—"received, and agreed in a like respect for them."

I may here advert for a little to the discredit which these controversies have entailed on the Christian cause. It is painful to read of them; and I am not sure whether Mosheim's Church History does not leave an impression behind it that is on the whole unfavourable to one's respect for religion. The truth is, that it is not a work animated by a spirit of piety or of great moral earnestness in behalf of the gospel, and, though written with great force and eloquence, is mainly a record either of the external progress of Christianity in the world, or of the internal politics of the Church, together with those melancholy aberrations from the simplicity and truth of Scripture which were the offspring of a wayward and wrong-headed philosophy. The puerilities, the exasperation, about trifles, the subtle and scholastic controversies which interminably sprung up the one after the other, and kept the Christian world in fire and fury perpetual—these altogether form a most humiliating spectacle to the friends of Christianity, and have ministered food both for ridicule and triumph to the enemies of our faith. They have been the game of infidelity in all ages, and more especially in modern times; and ere the spirit of religious dissension is indulged in, we should consider seriously how much it dries up the well-spring of vital Christianity within the limits of the Church, and what a prolific theme both of derision and of argument it puts into the mouths of gainsayers.

And yet there is, in spite of all the disputes, in all their endless ramifications that have vexed and agitated the professors of Christianity, there is a substantial oneness in this religion, whether we regard the objective oneness of it as exhibited in Scripture, or its subjective oneness as exhibited in the hearts and the principles of all true believers. To bring out the former, we have to expound and rightly to systematize the Old and New Testaments; to bring out the latter, we have to

trace the history of a Church very different indeed from that of Mosheim—not the nominal but the real Church, as composed exclusively of those who have lived under the power of the true faith, and abounded in the fruits of righteousness. Such a history has been conceived, and though not with first-rate talent or effect, yet, on the whole, has been respectably executed, by Milner; and apart from its other recommendations as a work of deep piety, it certainly deserves to be read were it for no other purpose than to counteract the mischievous influence of Mosheim. It is delightful to trace his way from century to century in pursuit of the one specific object of vital godliness wherever it is to be found; and it is still more delightful to observe, that even in the ages of thickest spiritual and intellectual darkness, he never loses sight of it, but that each generation had its worthies; and however feebly the light of true piety and principle may have glimmered, it never was wholly extinguished. This is the secret but the only substantial history of the Church of Christ; and when thus studying it, the unity and consistency and high importance of the faith are nobly vindicated. Christianity stands forth in characters of consistency and greatness when reflected from the pages of Augustine, or the dissertations of St. Bernard, or the devotional pieces of good Bishop Anselm, or the personal history and sufferings of the persecuted Waldenses. It is there we learn what sort of thing Christianity is; and when we behold the cardinal truths of the gospel embodied in the faith of men, and germinating all the cardinal virtues in their characters and lives, we then recognise, that instead of a fitful, capricious, and vacillating thing, distempered by passion and folly, and carried about with every wind of speculation, it has an indestructible character of identity and endurance which announces it the same in every country and every age, so that, like wisdom of old, it is justified of all its children.

PART I.—PROP. II.—CHAP. I.

THERE IS NOT SATISFACTORY EVIDENCE, THAT PERSONS PRETENDING TO BE ORIGINAL WITNESSES OF ANY OTHER MIRACLES, SIMILAR TO THOSE BY WHICH CHRISTIANITY IS SUPPORTED, HAVE ACTED IN THE SAME MANNER AS THE WITNESSES TO THE CHRISTIAN MIRACLES, IN ATTESTATION OF THE ACCOUNTS WHICH THEY DELIVERED, AND SOLELY IN CONSEQUENCE OF THEIR BELIEF IN THE TRUTH OF THOSE ACCOUNTS.

THE PRAYER.

MAY Thy Spirit, O Lord, which guides to all truth, guide our inquiries both into the credentials and into the contents of Thy Word. Give us to recognise the hand of Thine ever watchful providence in the transmission of the Sacred Record, with all its marvellous evidences and all its undoubted tokens both of purity and authority to later times. May we hold it not enough to recognise Thy Bible as the book of Heaven's communications to the world. Deliver us from the guilt of those who let it lie beside them unread, unopened, unattended to; and as we read, may a light from on high shine upon all its pages.

I think that Paley underrates the strength of particularity as an evidence of truth. He seems to express himself as if previous to the admission of it as a proof, we must have anterior and independent ground for believing in the probity of the narrative. Now it appears to me, that without any conviction of this on separate reasons at all, the particularity itself may be such as to furnish decisive evidence of the probity—so that, though we know nothing from any external source or testimony of the author, we might infer from particularity alone the general truth of the narration, and the trustworthiness of him who framed it.

It is true, as he himself says, that the author of a studied and elaborate fiction might sustain—and for the sake of giving credibility to his imposture—a most minutely circumstantial character throughout his whole composition. But it is not at all likely that he would frame any other coincidences than those which might serve his purpose with the generality of

readers; or any other than those which might flash their own broad and discernible evidence on a cursory perusal. We should not, for example, from under the surface of his narrative, be able to fetch such deep and hidden coincidences, as one out of ten thousand readers would not think of going in pursuit of. The truth of any complex or extended narrative does furnish those less obvious agreements—those recondite harmonies, such as will undergo a thorough sifting to the very bottom of the subject. But they are such harmonies as no impostor would ever think of laboriously constructing, seeing that he would not lay his account with being so laboriously tracked through all the depths and windings of his story; and, accordingly, when the story is so tracked, and it leads to the discovery of many before latent adjustments, which had hitherto and perhaps for whole centuries escaped observation, it gives such an impression of undesignedness and such evidence of an original and well-founded truth in the history, as does of itself, and independent of all argument from any other quarter, warrant the conclusion of a substantial credibility in the narrative and the substantial honesty of its author. A single writer, a single book of the New Testament, may be compared with itself by the confronting and cross-questioning, as it were, of its different passages, and the argument I now speak of, for the probability of its author, be elicited therefrom. Or it may be compared with other histories in its allusions to the polity and customs and history of the time at which it was published, and its minute coincidences in many nice and delicate parts with these, as has been done by Lardner, may impress the same conclusion. Or it may even be the sustained accuracy of all its references to the localities of that land which is the scene of its history, an accuracy made out perhaps by painful research and interwoven with the whole texture of the composition, giving a well-grounded assurance of its being a record of actual doings and actual travellings. It is not likely that one Evangelist would have fabricated the circumstance of water issuing along with blood from the side of Jesus, seeing that not one out of ten thousand of his readers could know the con-

sistency of this particular with anatomical truth. It is not likely that another, in telling the journey from Nazareth to Capernaum, would have devised the insertion of the single monosyllable, *down*, in the prospect of such a pleasing confirmation as Dr. Clarke has drawn from it when travelling through the Holy Land, he remarked the striking graphical consistency of the places with the narrative. There is nothing but truth, artless truth, which could have generated such a host of symphonies as we gather from the observations of Harmer. Nothing but truth, on the one hand, could have stood the test of such a critical inquisition as the writings of the Evangelists and Apostles have been made to undergo; and it is utter extravagance, on the other hand, to imagine that an impostor, in the anticipation of being so closely and laboriously scrutinized, would, underneath that face of plausibility which he spread over his performance, to deceive vulgar eyes, have carried this work of unnatural violence downward among the arcana of the subject, and that for the purpose of blinding the judgment of critics and commentators for centuries to come. I will venture to say, that in the New Testament history there are made out thousands of coincidences with other things wherewith that history may be compared, and which a fabricator would never have thought of;—coincidences of a very minute and statistical character with the geography of the country, in which transactions are reported to have taken place, or through which the actors in the history are represented to have travelled, and that may still be verified in modern times, as by Harmer and Clarke and others, who have explored those regions which form the scene of the New Testament history;—coincidences with sacred and general history, such as have been laboriously traced by Gray and Prideaux and Shuckford and others;—coincidences with the known customs and government and economy, and various sects or institutions of the times, such as the assiduous Lardner has so amply supplied;—coincidences of the historical with the moral and didactic pieces of the New Testament, as have been strikingly brought out by Dr. Paley himself in one of his most

original and masterly performances, the *Horæ Paulinæ*, where he confronts the Book of Acts with the Epistles of the great Apostle of the Gentiles ;—coincidences of the historical pieces with each other, as has been explained by Blunt ;—why, altogether they compose such a tissue and complication of evidence as, irrespective of any other proof for the integrity of the writers, is exceedingly difficult to resist, and which creates not only a strong prepossession, but really a strong conviction in favour of the general truth of the whole. I have already adverted to another attempt for the eliciting of evidence from the comparison of Scripture with Scripture by Graves, who writes a book on the Pentateuch, and who institutes a cross-examination between Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers on the one hand, and Deuteronomy on the other. Neither he nor Blunt have made out so impressive an argument as Dr. Paley. They did not possess such good materials as he did ; but you will do well to remark, that in as far as all three have succeeded, they have brought out an evidence from the comparison not of what is within the record to what is without, but from a comparison of one part of the record with another, so that, in as far as they have succeeded, they have shown that there is a self-evidencing power in the Bible.

Paley classes Colonel Gardiner's vision among instances of false perception. There is a distinction, however, to which Dr. Paley afterwards adverts, though he seems to have forgotten it in the present instance, between a miracle for the purpose of evidence to others, and a miracle whose sole terminating object is the conviction of him before whom it is performed. The vision may not be a sufficient credential for the founder of some new species of proselytism, and yet it may be sufficient for the individual benefit of him who is the subject of it. In the case of Colonel Gardiner, the miracle, if miracle it really was, was presented exclusively to himself, and was certainly, too, of that momentary character which Dr. Paley includes among the other disqualifications upon which he would set aside the authority of an alleged miracle as being a voucher for a new system of religion. And yet though Colonel Gardiner was not

sufficiently furnished, in virtue of a conceived supernatural visitation, to carry the conviction of others as if he had been charged with a message to them, there may have been quite enough in it to carry, and most rightly and legitimately, too, his own conviction that the message had at least come to himself. Now I should hold it unphilosophical to pronounce an absolute sentence of rejection on a story of this sort. There is the utmost difference between the kind of evidence which would be required to satisfy an individual that he had been made the object of a personal address from the upper sanctuary, and the kind of evidence that would be required to satisfy others of his being invested with the prophetic office for the purpose of authoritatively addressing to them a revelation of the will of God. In the one case he is the object of the message; in the other case he is the bearer of it. The evidence that would suffice, and ought to suffice, for convincing him that there is no delusion, may not be enough for convincing others that there is no delusion. The external light about which, with the conscious possession of his senses, he assuredly felt that there was no deception; the voice that he heard, and whose articulations he could distinctly follow; the text of Scripture suddenly and powerfully suggested, and which bore to his mind the great master principle that wielded the ascendancy over him, and brought relief to all his difficulties and all his fears; the intimate experience that he had of a change in the state of his heart and in the whole drift of his inclinations, now shifted from the things of sense to the things of sacredness—these may be known, and indubitably known, to the person himself; they may to him carry as much proof and persuasion along with them as the most palpable miracles, and yet with the power of working these palpable miracles he would need to be invested ere he could assume with effect the office of a prophetic messenger to others. We grant, on the one hand, the need of such palpable miracles to accredit a revelation which is addressed generally to the world; but, on the other hand, we hold it unphilosophical in positive terms to deny the possibility of such secret and special revelations as are narrated by Doddridge in

the case before us. In the spirit of Butler we would say, that for aught we know they may be true, and be attended with such evidence as is enough to awaken and convince an individual, though not enough to accredit a prophet. The operation of the internal or experimental evidence is liable to the same ridicule, and with as little reason.

To pass from the account of such visitations as those experienced by Colonel Gardiner to the account of an ordinary conversion effected according to the doctrine of our Church, and, as we believe, according to the doctrine of Scripture, by the influence of the Holy Spirit on him who is the subject of it; it is well known that Dr. Paley's sentiments underwent a change on the subject of this great transition in the history of every Christianized mind, and one could almost guess that the passage now before us was written previous to that change. He admits, no doubt, that the faith which is wrought by the influences of the good Spirit, though resting on no external proof, may be on grounds convincing to the persons themselves; but in stating that the credibility of such revelations "stands upon their alliance with other miracles," he expresses the thing too generally. Their own credibility to others may not, but their credibility in themselves, and to him who is the subject of the influence in question, may, on strictly rational grounds, admit, we think, of the fullest vindication. It is true that in this process there is nothing addressed to the outward senses, but there may be most satisfactory notices addressed to a faculty which takes still more intimate and immediate cognizance of things—we mean the faculty of consciousness, what Dr. Thomas Brown calls the faculty of internal observation. A man, for example, who wont, in the reading of his Bible, to be nauseated by its phraseology, or repelled by the aspect of hopeless and unmeaning mysticism which overspread its pages, and, at the same time, a man who, in a state of moral insensibility and blindness to the guilt of living in the habitual disregard of God, felt no responding echo in his heart either to the scriptural denunciation of guilt or to the scriptural offers of reconciliation—just conceive of such a man that he was, in the first instance, made

alive to the enormity of his practical atheism, and that, when pursued by the agonies of present remorse and the terrors of the coming vengeance, he found in the word of God both a faithful mirror of his own felt sinfulness and the manifestation of a remedy altogether suited to his wants and to his fears ; suppose, after such a change of view and of sentiment brought about by no logical or laborious process that he was conscious of, but landing him in this consequence—that he now saw a pertinence and a power and a weight of application and meaning in thousands of texts which had before escaped his observation, that he perceived a multiple light cast and reflected from one part of the volume to another, and above all, a variety of most precious adaptations to the state of his own heart and character, so as to draw from it a never-failing comfort in all his spiritual distresses, and the most applicable counsel and confirmation in the midst of every difficulty—the reality of such a change as this may be as palpable to him as any of the realities of the outer world, because though not to be seen by the eye of the body, yet seen by the eye of internal observation. Now without the intermedium either of a vision or of a voice, this felt revelation in himself may be to him the most warrantable evidence of a visitation on his spirit by the Spirit of God. It is very true that he is in contact with nothing but the tablet of his own heart on the one hand, and the tablet of Scripture upon the other. But his power of consciousness has of late been made so much more vivid and discerning, and he in consequence knows himself so much better than before, and his power of apprehending the Bible has also been so much invigorated, and he can now behold so many more of the wondrous things contained in God's law, and the accordancies between the former, which is the internal, and the latter, which is the outward tablet, have of course multiplied so much upon his observation, that altogether he may be impressed, and we think soundly and justly impressed, by a Divinity in the book which all the historical and argumentative evidence that accompanies it may have never before impressed upon him. Now in that book we are told of the Spirit of God, and how He acts not

directly but mediately on the hearts of men ; how the Word is the great instrument of all His demonstrations ; and how in addressing the truth to the mind, He tells us not any truth which is placed without the limits of the record, but illuminates and makes palpable the truth which has occupancy there. We believe that such will be the fruit of all sustained and abiding moral earnestness when directed to the study of the Bible, the result of your repeated perusals and your persevering prayers, that in this way the truth, though not argumented on literary or historical grounds, will become manifest to your consciences ; and as the effect of the good spiritual influence, not so available we will admit for the conviction of others, but most completely and conclusively available for your own conviction, you will arrive, and justly arrive, at the same deliverance respecting the Bible which the Corinthians of old pronounced on some of its then living penmen : this book tells all the things that are in the heart, and makes manifest the secrets which be within it ; verily God is in it of a truth.

As to the instances of false miracles referred to in Chapter II., I must here refer you to Campbell. He gives a fuller and more satisfactory account of those miracles than Dr. Paley does. I wonder that our author takes no notice of him. I think that Campbell is not sufficiently appreciated in England. His was a mind of a very high order—shrewd, and subtle, and dexterous beyond most men in the warfare of argument. He completely demolished Hume's false argument, which is a different work you will observe from that of setting up a true argument on its right and proper basis. I regard him in calibre of intellect and talent to be the first name that the Church of Scotland has to boast of, and think he is very far from being treated with justice by the writers of our sister kingdom. He is a man of prodigiously larger dimensions than Beattie, who was so idolized in the South as the restorer both of reason and Christianity against the attacks of a philosophical and a religious scepticism. Beattie's *Essay on Truth* is a performance I do think of great merit ; but the author of the *Philosophy of Rhetoric*, of the *Essay on Miracles*, and of the *Preliminary*

Dissertations to the translation of the Four Gospels, shines a greatly brighter star in our literary hemisphere. I do not altogether comprehend the neglect and silence of Paley in regard to him, nor yet the contempt, I had almost said the insolence, of Bloomfield, a person who, notwithstanding the value in many respects of his laborious compilation, the *Recensio Synoptica*, is infinitely beneath Campbell in the depth and the philosophy of Scripture criticism. I suspect that England feels as if it owed him a grudge, for he has exposed with singular felicity and power its own favourite doctrine of the infdelibility of the clerical character in the transmission of it from one age to another since the days of the Apostles. My own feeling of Campbell is, that in respect to the wisdom of the letter, he was one of the greatest men that ecclesiastical literature can boast of. There is the wisdom of the Spirit, which the Bible distinguishes from the wisdom of the letter. It becomes me not to pronounce on the personal Christianity of any individual; but I can discern few or no traces of warm and devoted attachment on the part of Dr. Campbell to the peculiar doctrines of the gospel, and I do think that his professional ministrations on the whole were suited to shed a blight (and a blight all the deadlier in proportion to his abilities) over one of the largest provinces of our land.*

* ["Reid had a more vigorous and original mind than Stewart, and Campbell, I suspect, was superior to both. If Campbell had devoted his attention to mental philosophy, he could have done all that Reid or Stewart has accomplished; but neither of them could have written the 'Preliminary Dissertations' to his work on the Gospels."—*Conversational Remarks* by Robert Hall.—See Works, vol. vi. p. 123.—W. H.]

PART II.—CHAP. I.

ON PROPHECY.

THE PRAYER.

THOU, O God, reignest among the armies of heaven and the inhabitants of this lower world. Thou lookest abroad over all space, yet overlookest not the humblest of Thy dependent family; but with a marvellous combination of power, which we can neither describe nor comprehend, Thou at once superintendest the government of this immense universe, and exercisest the most perfect vigilance and care over the meanest portions of it. Give us to maintain the habitual attitude of our soul's dependence upon God. May we know what it is to set Thee continually before us. May the sentiment—Thou God seest us—ever be present to our thoughts, and have an ascendant influence over all our deliberations and all our doings.

I cannot at this moment afford to expatiate on prophecy in a degree at all proportionate to the worth and importance of the theme, and must just pass it over in the same cursory way that Paley himself does. Let me, in the mean time, however, recommend the following treatises to your perusal—Bishop Newton's *Dissertations on the Prophecies*, Hurd's *Introduction to the Study of the Prophecies*, Sherlock on the *Use and Intent of Prophecy*. In Marsh's *Divinity Lectures*, too, you will meet with something very instructive on this topic. Keith on *Prophecy*, too, though pleasing and popular, is not on that account a less valuable performance. I have already adverted to Davison's book on the same argument—a writer of great originality and strength, and whom the high culture of the highest English education has not chastened into feebleness. There is great vigour of conception imbedded in expressive phraseology, though at times obscure from elaboration. He well says of the argument from prophecy, "that it forms what may be considered a more complex subject of the evidences of religion, belonging at once to the Jewish and Christian revelations, more than any other part of the proof penetrating both, and opening

a wide field of discussion in various directions." You will find in his volume great depth of reflection and novelty, as well as importance of remark. In addition to those works, or perhaps to some of you, in the mean time, as a substitute for these, I may mention that Horne gives a deal of information on this branch of the Christian Evidences, and that he will supply any deficiency of mine as to the recommendation of proper authors on the subject.

But before quitting the topic for the present, let me advert to a few of the more general questions and considerations which are involved in it. The actual comparison of specific prophecies with their respective fulfilments is at present out of the question, whether those fulfilments are recorded in Scripture or may be gathered from general history. For this I must refer you to the authors whom I have named, and indeed it is a matter more properly to be acquired by readings in the closet than by lectures from the Chair.

Suppose a prophecy to be fairly made out, that is, in the first place, a known promulgation of the prophecy prior to the event; secondly, the clear and palpable fulfilment of it; and, thirdly, the nature of the event itself being such that when the prediction of it was given it lay remote from human view, and could not be foreseen by any supposable effort of reason, or be decided upon principles of collusion derived from probability or experience—then an accomplishment of this sort gives the same argument for a Deity being concerned in the professed revelation wherewith it is associated, as is afforded by an ordinary miracle—the one in fact being a miracle of knowledge, just as the other is a miracle of power.

One of the rash utterances of Gibbon upon this subject was, that a previous conviction of the Divinity of the prophecies was necessary, ere an argument could be founded on the accordancy between a prediction and the event. His fame as an historian drew an attention to his infidelity, which its own ingenuity or strength of reasoning by no means entitled it to. This assertion of his, in particular, on the subject of prophecy, has been met with a formality and an abundance of argument, which

were altogether superfluous. It requires nothing in fact but a clear statement to disprove it. Give me a prediction uttered long enough before the event, and an accomplishment minute enough and harmonious enough with the prophecy to be clearly beyond the reach of human foresight, and it is just as decided an evidence of one being concerned in the matter whose knowledge was superior to that of men, as the accomplishment of a miracle at the word of command evinces the interposal of a being whose power is superior to that of men. There is something, I must observe by the way, that strikes me as peculiarly weak and superficial in the scepticism of Gibbon, and I feel that a very disproportionate attention has been given to him by some of our ablest writers in defence of Christianity. To satisfy you of the impotence of his reasoning, for example, on the subject of the rapid progress of Christianity being resolvable, as he would make it out, into natural causes, I should think it quite enough that you read a very few pages which Faber has bestowed on him in his work, entitled "The Difficulties of Infidelity." He is there met in a style of home-bred vigour, which completely oversets the pompous nothingness of his argument, and which, without the labour of any additional reading, makes you fully master both of the scepticism of this author, and of the reasoning by which it is overthrown.

But there is another very interesting general question on the subject of prophecy, and that is, whether in any instance it is susceptible of a twofold interpretation. I am aware of the startling appearance which this theory has when first proposed, though I doubt not that an actual examination among the actual instances, will convince most people that there is a real ground for it in Scripture.

It may perhaps serve to reconcile you more to the conception of double prophecy, when you recollect that there is a meaning conveyed by action as well as by expression, and that in the early ages, when the arbitrary or artificial language had not attained to the copiousness and the power which it has in our present day, its defects were supplied by symbolical language. In point of fact, the Prophets of the Old Testament were often

commanded to prophesy by action ; and on comparing the ritual of Moses with the explanations of a New Testament epistle, the Epistle to the Hebrews, we learn that the whole ceremonial law of the Jews was a symbolical language, which spoke to us of the future dispensation of the gospel. Knowledge was conveyed in those days, not through the medium of pronounced utterance alone, but through the medium of things and doings and historical personages: hence the legal types of the Levitical institute, which beautifully and expressively prefigured the realities of the Christian economy, after which in fact they were fashioned by Moses, who made all things according to the pattern showed him in the mount: hence, also, the prophetic types, of which we have frequent instances in the Old Testament, as in Jeremiah, making bonds and yokes to prefigure the destruction of the kings against whom he prophesied ; and last of all, historical types, as when the persons and characters and fortunes of eminent individuals in the Old Testament, were the prefigurations of a like character or fortune of eminent individuals in the New, or rather of that one eminent personage, even Christ Jesus, the testimony of whom was the very spirit and design of all prophecy.

Now, conceive that instead of an historical personage or thing being declared a type at the time of their appearance, they had been made the subjects of prophecy before their appearance, then two futurities were involved in the prediction, first, the appearance of a person or an event which was the type ; and, secondly, the ulterior appearance of a person or an event which was the antitype. As, for example, in the prophecies that respected Solomon, the type of Christ, which occur in the Book of Psalms, or that remarkable prophecy which respected the destruction of Jerusalem, a type of the destruction of the world. The prophecy might glow and be animated in its representation of the nearer, with the prospect of the greater and more distant that was to follow—the description may be too exalted for the one, because it approximated to the surpassing greatness of the other. The Prophet in his delineation of the type may have caught a colour and a glory from the antitype which it

shadowed, and this I believe to be a theory which one is at length compelled to adopt, not from the mere plausibility which belongs to it in the statement, but from an actual examination of Scripture passages.

You will observe that this twofold application of prophecy only comprehends a certain number of the specific instances. If it be thought to hurt the simplicity and fairness of the argument, it should be remembered that many, I believe most of the predictions in the Bible, have but one direct and primary application; but even when there is this double sense, it is really an utter mistake to imagine that this necessarily opens a door for the fanciful and the gratuitous in prophetic interpretation. The truth is, that when rightly conducted, it will be found that it fixes and ascertains a prediction more determinately that it has to meet as it were two conditions instead of one—that a harmony must be made out not only between it and a single separate subject, but a treble harmony as it were first between it and the nearer or typical event, then between it and the remote or antitypical event, and last of all, between the type and the antitype. It is difficult to work a conviction of this in you without a special examination of the instances. I predict, as the fruit of that examination, that most of you will be experimentally or observationally shut up to a faith in the reality both of those double interpretations and of the typical significancies between the symbol and the subject on which they are founded, and that so far from the evidence being impaired, it will grow of consequence both in strength and in beauty.

PART II.—CHAP. II.

MORALITY OF THE GOSPEL.

THE PRAYER.

WE desire, O God, to give Thee thanks at the remembrance of Thy holiness. We are sensible that the only real and enduring felicity of our nature lies in a resemblance to Thyself. Enable us to make progress in the great object of that economy under which we sit, by recovering the lost image of the Godhead. For this purpose may we be studiously observant of the morality of the gospel of the New Testament, both as exhibited by the great Master of our religion, and as prescribed by His law. May we every day become more like to Christ, and thus become more like to God, seeing that He is the brightness, that He is the express image of Thy person. Be with us now and ever.

In the beginning of this chapter, Paley says, "If I were to describe in a very few words the scope of Christianity as a revelation, I should say that it was to influence the conduct of human life by establishing the proof of a future state of rewards and punishments, 'to bring life and immortality to light.'"

I have had occasion to express my dissent from both of our text-books and from their eminent authors, when I thought them meagre, which I think they often are, in their representations of the subject-matter of Christianity—a very possible thing truly even on the part of its ablest and most efficient defenders against the assaults of infidelity from without. The two facts are in many respects as distinct as the work of inclosing a vineyard is from the work of its internal cultivation. One may go round the walls of our Zion, and tell the towers thereof, though as yet unable to reveal the glories of the inner temple.

I do not object to the prominence, or, in one view, the pre-eminence he gives to the doctrine of a future life. No orthodoxy in all other respects would have compensated for the want of its revelation. No system of religion, however fault-

less in everything else, could have stood without it ; for take away the doctrine of immortality, and though it may have remained as a system of truth, yet as a system of religion it would have been annihilated.

But while we fully admit that the great business of religion is to prepare for immortality, he, I greatly fear, wholly misrepresents the practical influences under which it is that this preparation is carried forward. According to his representation, it might appear that nothing more was wanted to put us in a right state of preparation than just a reward great enough to lure us into virtue, and a punishment great enough to deter us from vice. I can conceive no other impression to be taken from his account of the matter than this, that all which was needed for giving a right impulse to humanity was to furnish it with an adequate motive, and that motive was made adequate simply by sufficiently enhancing the remuneration for obedience, and sufficiently aggravating the penalty for transgression. It appears to me as if in the mind both of Butler and Paley upon this subject, the great charm and efficacy of the doctrine of immortality lay in the multiple power which eternal had over temporal sanctions, and in that it proposed to man a better bargain for his services, a higher wage for the work which God put him to, a severer and more appalling chastisement should he prove a remiss or an unfaithful labourer. At this rate, you will observe, the whole spirit of the legal economy is kept entire. There is no account taken of Christianity as a restorative system, or of that mediatorial economy under which the guilt of sin is expiated, and the power of sin is done away. All the anxieties and fears which attach to the condition of—"Do this and live," abide in full force after such a statement ; and I do think that with no other guidance to the scope of the gospel than what is furnished in this passage by our author, we should miss altogether the great characteristic and leading peculiarity of the gospel.

What I should call the essence of the gospel is the revelation of that great event by which, after man had forfeited all his rights and incurred the penalties of a broken law, these penal-

ties were borne for him, and those rights again earned for him, by Him on whom the chastisement of his peace was laid, and who brought in an everlasting righteousness. He does not now work to make out his claim to heaven, but heaven, already his by a gift, offers the powerfulest incitements to work and to watch with all perseverance. He is distinctly informed that it is a place of holiness, and that none but those of congenial character and feelings can be happy there. His business is not to make out his title-deed by his virtues, but by his virtues to make out his meetness for that inheritance of glory. You will find a difference, as wide as the east is from the west, between the condition of him who toils for heaven as a recompense, and of him who, already regarding heaven as his own, prepares himself, with all the alacrity which faith and hope can inspire, for its pure delights, for its holy services.

In the note at the beginning of the chapter on the subject of the extent of those benefits which have been achieved by the death of Christ, if Paley does not enter into the region of conjecture, he at least plants a footstep on the very margin of it. I can scarcely say he goes too far, though he certainly could not with safety or prudence have gone farther. There is one passage, and but one which I at present recollect, in Scripture which seems however to warrant the length to which he has actually proceeded—I mean that where it is said that Christ reconciled all things to God, whether they be things in earth or things in heaven,* intimating that there is a something, we know not what, connected with the enterprise of redemption which has a bearing on other orders of being, and a relation with distant parts of the universe—a grandeur in it commensurate with the greatness of Him by whom it was accomplished, and in virtue of which, instead of being limited in its effects to the destiny of but one planet and one species, it seems as if involved with larger and higher interests, thus having a scope wide as infinity, even as it has a consequence that will last for ever.

But the most practically interesting part of this rather adventurous speculation, is that which relates to the people of our

* Coloss. i. 20.

own world, in regard to whom Dr. Paley seems to intimate that the benefit of Christ's death may extend to those who never heard of it. And so it may, for aught we know. With this qualification I would not quarrel with the conjecture, and would only interpose a caution, lest we should regard the people who lie without the limits of Christendom to be so benefited already by the mysterious and untold influence which the redemption by Christ has had upon them, as at all to slacken or supersede the ardour of missionary benevolence. Certain it is, that whatever unknown advantage the death of the Saviour may have obtained for those to whom the tidings of it never have been borne, there is unspeakable enlargement—there is all the magnitude of a greatly overpassing good represented in Scripture as resulting from the knowledge of the Saviour. We lie indeed under an express and imperative obligation to spread these tidings all over the world—"Go and preach the gospel to every creature;" and let us not, therefore, find any apology for that inertness which is so prevalent among Christians in regard to missionary exertion in any imagined good which we may conceive is already wrought for them by some unrevealed channel of conveyance. Throughout the whole of the New Testament the main benefit of Christ's death is represented to descend upon men through the intermedium of faith; and "how can they believe except they hear? how can they hear without a preacher?"

As to the text which Dr. Paley quotes, that Christ died for the whole world, let it well be understood that His death is not represented as having achieved an actual pardon for the whole world, but as having achieved an amnesty which might be proposed to the whole world. But to receive the benefit of the amnesty, we must hear of it; we must understand the footing on which it is held out, and comply with the terms of it. I for one do not object to the expression of eternal life being yours in offer, but in order that it may be yours in possession, there must be an acceptance on your part, and that it is your faith in the reality of the offer which constitutes this acceptance. Christ died for the whole world, because now and

in consequence of his death the offer of the remission of sins may be made to the whole world ; and when the expression is thus understood, so far from superseding, it enhances to the utmost the obligation which lies upon us to bear this precious overture of reconciliation among all the families of earth. They whom that overture never reached lie in consequence, we have every reason to believe, under a heavy destitution, which tells on their state through eternity ; and they, again, whom it has reached, and who have nevertheless rejected it, so far from experiencing the benefit and virtue of the atonement by the Saviour, will entail upon themselves the burden of a sorer condemnation. That atoning death is the savour of life unto life to those only who accept of its offered benefits ; to those who refuse, it will be the savour of death unto death.

PART II.—CHAP. III.

THE CANDOUR OF THE WRITERS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

THE PRAYER.

WE feel, O God, how entirely we are at Thy disposal, and how, in all the events of providence, Thou indeed hast the mastery over us. Give us to feel as we ought the whole extent of our dependence, and that to Thee we owe the continuance of every present blessing, the fulfilment of every future hope. Do Thou accomplish Thine own promise of causing all things to work together for good to them who love Thee ; and that we may love the God who made us, may we put faith in the gospel of Thy Son. May all terror be displaced from our hearts ; may confidence and affection take the occupancy there ; and may we be completely furnished for the walk and the ways of holiness, through faith working by love, and love yielding all manner of obedience.

The New Testament may be regarded altogether as a striking and wonderful phenomenon when viewed in connexion with the age and the circumstances under which it was produced. The various characteristics which belong to it, whether

as a moral or literary composition, go to prove that it at least borders on the miraculous, if they do not fully establish its claims to this designation. Or, should it fail in reaching the distinct and definite character of a miracle, so as to constitute a finished proof, it at least approximates so nearly to this as to constitute a likelihood or a promise of veracity. There may not be enough in the argument to overbear the conviction, but there is enough in it to invest it with a rightful and a challengeable power over the attention. It is a mistake to imagine that the collateral, or the auxiliary, or the subordinate evidences of our faith, might all have been dispensed with. They subserve a high purpose, even though they should fall short of fully satisfying the mind that Christianity is true. They, in fact, secure in many cases, and ought to secure in all cases, a hearing for Christianity. They first invite and then prolong the regards of the inquirer towards it, and they often prolong his regards until he come within sight of those credentials which at length compel a full and final verdict in its favour. And it is of prime importance to observe, that many of those symptoms of veracity which Paley in this chapter has expounded to us, present themselves to the very early notice of observers. They give a *prima facie* aspect of credibility to the New Testament. They announce themselves on the instant even of a first perusal; for one cannot mistake the artlessness, and the sincerity, and the high moral tone wherewith the volume from beginning to end is so obviously pervaded. And it must now be familiar to you, that to feel the force of these arguments it is not necessary that they should ever have been stated, or that you should ever have recognised them as arguments at all. They work an impression in favour of the Bible, without the impression being ever once reflected upon—they carry the judgment; and though they have the actual grounds on which that judgment rests, yet thousands there are, as you already know, capable of forming the judgment, yet wholly incapable either of stating the grounds, or even perhaps of understanding the statement of them when made by another. It is not necessary, first, that a Paley should

remark on the naturalness of this one passage or that other, ere a peasant should feel the naturalness. The truth is, that this pervading naturalness has been felt by thousands and thousands more of homely understandings, and wrought its appropriate effects in conciliating and helping on to decided convictions, ere any learned expounder arose and remarked it as a peculiar and characteristic excellence of the New Testament. There is thus the evidence working its direct influence on minds that never cast a reflex eye towards it. I have no doubt that the naturalness is felt by many a cottage reader, and has its effect, a warrantable effect, though he may never have looked reflexly upon it, and begetting a general confidence in the truth of the whole. The honesty of the writers he can also recognise. He can read in their testimony the natural tones or marks of integrity, and be impressed by them. To the many nameless indications of their truth, he yields the sympathy of his trust; and we doubt not, that in various ways there is a certain evidence or faith-working power in the Bible far beyond what they who take up the subject philosophically have ever yet been, or perhaps ever will be able to analyze.

There is an exceeding naturalness in the conduct of Gallio, —referred to among other instances by Paley,—who cared for none of these things, and on the moment he understood that the question related to some sectarian points of controversy among themselves, drove both the parties from the judgment-seat. There is the utmost dramatic justness of representation in the contemptuous impatience wherewith he put away from him the matter that did not belong to his legitimate province, and which he felt to be either nauseous or insignificant. And it is far from being a solitary exhibition, for we think he exhibited the very spirit which might be detected in almost all that has come down to us of the sayings or sentiments of the heathen respecting Christianity. It was a matter of obscure sectarianism that lay beyond their cognizance, and they spoke of it accordingly, ignorantly but scornfully, condemning it with as great decision as if they knew it all, and yet plainly discovering that they knew nothing about it. We see this

plainly in Tacitus, and Pliny, and Suetonius, and Lucian ; and it so accords in fact with what we might conceive or might have witnessed in the present day, that we cannot fail to be impressed by it with the identity of human nature in all ages. We can easily figure how a high official personage, occupied with his own engrossing topics, would feel or express himself in regard to any ignoble sect, with a perfect ignorance of all its peculiarities, and yet a perfect sense and impression of the littleness of them all. I remember being much struck with this about some sixteen years ago, when the question of Missions to India was discussed in Parliament, and a great deal of evidence was taken on both sides of the controversy. The preponderance of the testimony was altogether on the side of the missionary cause, and it was found accordingly that its success was not incompatible with the safety of the British interests in that distant region of the globe. Among other witnesses, Warren Hastings was examined, and nothing could exceed the utter incompetence of his evidence, discovering as it did a glaring misapprehension of all the facts of the case, and evincing him to be an utter stranger to transactions which took place in his own vicinity, and throughout the country where he both resided and reigned. Yet nothing could be more natural than his total misinformation on the matter ; and it was really not to be marvelled at, that in the multiplicity of his official cares, a matter so fractional as the incipient efforts of a few missionaries among the mighty population who were under him, should have altogether escaped his observation. The confidence that marked his hostility to the enterprise is not so easily justified ; but it is the very confidence coupled with the very ignorance discovered by many who bring home from India the most hostile misrepresentations of the missionary cause, and claim the authority of having been residents on the spot. A little reflection might suffice to demonstrate how insufficient the plea of residence is. It is truly a possible thing to live in the busy engrossment of one's own affairs, and to be scarcely aware of the existence of many important transactions and things which are going on almost at our very door. There is great room for

the fellow-subjects of the empire, nay, even for the fellow-citizens of a populous town, losing sight of each other. In such a city as the one we live in, for example, how many hundreds are there in the highest and most fashionable circles who know little or nothing of the state of its religious sects or religious societies ! How little would a mere contiguous residence in this case avail as a plea for being listened to ! What superior weight would the written statement of one having a part in these transactions have over the careless and conversational depositions of men who, though living on the spot, were at almost an infinite moral distance from the matter in question ! And thus it is, that the reports of progress and success by such men as Carey and others, the accredited missionaries from Britain to India, far outweigh the random assertions, whether of civil or military gentlemen, from that part of the world.

PART II.—CHAP. IX.

THE PROPAGATION OF CHRISTIANITY.

THE PRAYER.

WE desire, O God, to keep an habitual hold upon Thyself in the midst of this world's distractions. Amid the multiplicity of our doings, may we forget not that Thou art the Being with whom we have mainly and emphatically to do, and may we know what it is to keep Thee in remembrance all the day long, and to have our hearts steadfast with God. O do Thou recall us from the deep and obstinate ungodliness of nature. Do Thou awaken us to a new moral and spiritual existence. Do Thou work in us the faith of the Gospel, that through Him who died to regenerate as well as to redeem, we may be quickened in the new life, and animated by the new hope.

Paley ascribes the less rapid progress of Christianity in our own times to the evidences being not so strong. I think he is in error here. It was not the miracles which formed the main instrument of conversion even in the age of their performance.

One thing, in the first instance, is clear, that many were the cases in which the reality of those supernatural performances was fully admitted by those who stood their ground against them. No one would say of Nicodemus that he was converted at the time of his conversation with our Saviour, and yet he both acknowledged the miracles of our Saviour, and acknowledged them as proofs, too, that God was with Him. Our Saviour did not, it is obvious, sustain this acknowledgment, sincere and honest as it seems to have been, as enough to mark Nicodemus as a Christian; and He followed up this remark of His visitor by a description of that which constitutes the very essence of conversion:—"Except a man be born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Except he be born of the Spirit, he cannot see that kingdom.

Let me here present you with as accurate a definition of a miracle as I can frame. A miracle is an ostensible violation of some law of nature, above the reach of human power to effect, or human intelligence to foresee, and preceded by the command or the announcement of one who appeals to it as the manifestation of a Being whose power and intelligence are superhuman. I call it an ostensible and not a real violation, upon this principle—that, if a real violation, it would offer to our notice a different consequent coming in train of the same antecedent; whereas the antecedent is not really the same, it is but apparently or ostensibly the same. The intervention in fact of a superhuman power, is that which makes it substantially a different antecedent from before. You would not say there was any violation of the law of gravity when a falling body is arrested in its descent by a hand that intercepts it, and is there sustained at a distance from the ground. But were there no hand stretched forth, and the body sustained by an invisible agency, and without, therefore, any visible support, this is as little a real violation of the law of gravity as the former. The invisible agency does now what the visible hand did then, and it is just as much a different antecedent in the one case as in the other. It is this I think which requires the term "ostensible" to characterize the violation. And it is not

without consideration that I subjoin the latter half of the definition, preceded by the command or the announcement of a Being who appeals to it as the manifestation of such power. Here observe what is excluded by the former half. Suppose another Roger Bacon to arise among us, and discover some new force in nature, which, under peculiar circumstances brought together by himself, lands in a result the opposite of all that we ever before observed in the apparent circumstances, and to announce beforehand this result as an evidence of a superhuman power; why, such a case must be guarded against in our definition of a miracle, and it is done so by our alleging that the thing was above the reach of human power,—else the first sight of an inflated balloon might have been a miracle, and we bring it down from the rank of a miracle by bringing it to the test of our definition. This semblance of a miracle is but a semblance, because not above the reach of human power, and lying within the reach of the power of the experimentalist or discoverer who was concerned in it. But suppose that instead of announcing the ascent of a balloon, he were to announce, in the form of a command if you choose, the miracle of Mahomet, that the moon should split asunder, and it did so accordingly. This is a miracle, and yet might not be so, were it not for the announcement or command that came before it; because, for aught we know, there might have been not even any known law ostensibly violated in this matter. There might be a chemistry going on within the recesses of that planet, which, in virtue of certain known principles, would explode at the time, even as the similar planets, recently discovered, bear many evidences of their being the fragments of a larger planet rent asunder by explosion. You would not call that explosion a miracle; neither would I call this, but for the clause of the definition. The thing is beyond the reach of human power; but this is not enough for making it a miracle, yet if announced immediately before, then whether done by an immediate forthputting of power on the part of a living being or not, even though but done in virtue of a natural process just on the eve of its consummation, then although not a miracle because be-

yond the reach of human power, it is a miracle because beyond the reach of human intelligence to foresee ; and he who wrought it must either be superhuman himself, or if announced by a man, that man must have had converse with one who is superhuman.

We think that there is a power in the evidence of miracles which would carry our minds. We have had no experimental verification of this power upon ourselves. And we are really not sure whether, apart from the explanation that Paley gives of the matter, apart from the solution of magic or of demonry by which the Jews made their escape from the conclusion that this man of undoubted miracles must have come from God, we are not sure whether we might not have persisted in our incredulity ourselves, even under the very exhibition which they had. At all events, there is a strong testimony here to the internal evidence of Scripture, or to the affirmation by the Saviour to the greatness of the self-evidencing power of the Bible, when he states, that resistance to the one species of evidence is the token of an equal resistance to the other species of evidence. "If they believe not Moses and the prophets, neither will they believe though a man should rise from the dead."

You will recollect the principles on which I insisted at great length in the early period of our course. They are principles I think which help to explain many of the peculiarities which belong to the actual state of the Christian evidence. I have asked you repeatedly to distinguish between the probability which amounts to a call upon the attention, and the proof which amounts to the justification of a verdict on the question attended to. It may perhaps surprise many, but as you know I think with Paley, that the evidence of miracles was not overpowering in these days. I would even carry the position a little further ; I think that the great use of these miracles was to accomplish the former and not the latter of the two functions. They constituted a rightful call on the attention of those who witnessed them ; and as the fruit of that attention, there was in reserve a higher and a more effective evidence, even the internal.

PART III.—CHAP. VI.

WANT OF UNIVERSALITY IN THE KNOWLEDGE OF CHRISTIANITY ;
AND OF CLEARNESS IN ITS EVIDENCE.

THE PRAYER.

IN Thee, O God, we live, and move, and have our being. Give us to feel the intimacy of this relation. Give us to feel the subordination of the thing that is formed to Him who formed it, that we may no longer walk in the independence of our own counsels, but that in all our ways we may acknowledge Thee, and submit ourselves in every thing to the will of God. May Thy law have a pure and a practical ascendancy over us ; and though Christ hath borne its penalties, may we never forget that to us remains the obligation of its precepts. May we walk as those who are justified by faith, yet judged by works, and bear a perpetual reference in our hearts to that day when we shall have to give an account to God of the deeds done in the body.

Paley says, that a full display of heaven would interfere with the activities of social life. I think he requires to be qualified here. The weaker the evidence for eternity, the more conspicuous is the prudence displayed in living for it, and the greater faith it demands for that purpose. That is the right way of looking at the subject ; and not to say that you could possibly overdo the work of preparation for eternity, which is the impression that Paley seems to convey.

It would require a very lengthened argument indeed to bestow full elucidation on the topic here adverted to by Paley. I can scarcely do more than state in express opposition to him, that you cannot overrate either the force or the frequency of religious considerations, that the constant bent of nature is all the other way, and you may give yourself quite indefinitely to the object of glorifying God to the utmost, of providing for eternity to the utmost. Such principles as are alleged by him are alleged to the effect of vindicating indifference, of bringing down the standard of Christianity, of adjusting an impracticable compromise between the spirit of the children of light

and the spirit of the children of this world. The perverse direction taken by the monks and the mystics of former days gives no legitimate warrant for this miserable dilution of the real essence of practical Christianity; and the precepts, high and superhuman as they may be reckoned, remain to this day of standing obligation to do all things to the glory of God, to do all things whatever in the name of Jesus. We know that a misapplication of these had the effect to banish many zealots of former ages out of the world; but this does not subvert or do away the true application, which is to animate all we do in the world with the sublime principle of godliness, and for the sublime object of perfecting and heightening our preparation for heaven. It is wholly a mistake that in a mind of ordinary soundness the force of the religious principle, even to the utmost, either unfits or withdraws from the necessary attention we should give to the business of the day, and the accommodations of the day. I feel quite assured that Paley's view in this matter does not accord with experience. To illustrate it by a familiar case:—Suppose a person setting out on a far journey to a place where, on his arrival, he knew that a magnificent fortune awaited him. His heart would be there. His thoughts would be ever carrying him forward in contemplation there; yet all this engrossment and big expectation of what he was tending to, would not strip him of the necessary attention and self-command for giving the requisite directions on the road, for ordering the right accommodation at night, for arranging a constant conveyance from one place to another, or even for remarking on the loveliness of the successive scenes, and noting either the comfort that gladdens or the beauty that smiles on the passing traveller.

Paley says, that the system of nature is a system of beneficence, but not of optimism; that is to say, that there are few cases in which we could not imagine something more perfect than that which we see. He instances rain, the supply of which is partial and irregular—much of it falling on the sea, where it is of no use, and much suffering being sometimes occasioned by its deficiency or delay; whereas, we could imagine showers

to fall just when and where they would do good, and so distributed over the globe as not to leave a field scorched with drought, or a plant withering for want of moisture. But we do not doubt that the arrangements of the atmosphere are regulated by God; and we are not to expect in revelation an optimism which we do not find in nature.

PART III.—CHAP. VII.

THE SUPPOSED EFFECTS OF CHRISTIANITY.

THE PRAYER.

WE rejoice in the declaration that he who willeth to do the will of God shall know of Christ's doctrine whether it be of God. We rejoice that the truth is thus made accessible to him who aspires with moral earnestness after it. Visit us, O Lord, with Thy grace in our hearts, that we may obtain light in our understandings, and verify in our own experience the saying, that he who seeketh findeth. Give us to feel the obligation of doing Thy will, and may it be our supreme desire to acquit ourselves of this obligation. And may we realize in the history of our own mind the connexion which Thyself hast intimated between purity of desire and purity of doctrine. Guide us in all our inquiries, and be ever with us.

Here also it is necessary to guard against the danger of a certain laxity of sentiment on the subject of the distinction between public and private morality, as if the obligations of the one were not equally binding with those of the other. The maxim that all is fair in politics is grounded on this laxity. What a man would blush to do in his individual capacity, he, associated with others, will, without either scruple or shame, do in a corporate capacity. One kingdom will practise violence and depredation against another, though each, perhaps, of the separate members in the government that originated the war would recoil from a similar injustice against any of his fellow-men. There is not the fine-edged morality or honour between nations that there is between individuals, and the violation of the former awakens little or none of that generous

indignance which the latter never fails to excite in the hearts of beholders. Now, what is true of morality holds still more eminently true of religion, and of those virtues which are peculiarly religious. It will be long ere a nation when smitten on the one cheek will lift up the other. It will be long ere it be regarded as a point of duty among states, in honour to prefer each other. Seeing that wanton injustice is so current a thing in the corporate transactions of such large communities with each other, it will be very long ere generosity be the rule or the principle of international proceedings. We are only describing a fact, or stating how the matter is; but though we have no time to discuss the principle, we think it right to aver that this is not as the matter ought to be, and that generally it were well if the corporate and the individual morality were at one, and more especially that the legislature were all made up of Christian men, and Christianity presided over all their deeds and all their deliberations.

In the conclusion of this chapter, Paley speaks somewhat lightly about differences of opinion. Here, again, we must qualify his assertions. A wrong opinion may be an evidence of that worst of all moral evil, indifference or heedlessness to the will of God, and its outgoings may lead to the worst consequences, both on the present moral condition and on the future everlasting state of those who have entertained it. It is a very delusive imagination that all creeds are equally acceptable, if there be equal sincerity on the part of those who profess them. There is nothing which a man is more blind to than his own insincerity, and nothing more subtle than the deception which the soul practises upon itself. And then to represent the matter as if it were insignificant what the dogma be, if we have only come honestly by it—why, according as one dogma or another has laid hold of the man's actual belief is he in a wholly different attitude of thought and feeling and moral relation to the God who formed him. I cannot imagine a greater specific diversity in this respect than that which obtains between a man who holds his own righteousness in whole or in part to form his meritorious claim to the rewards of eternity, and the man who,

renouncing all dependence thereupon, cleaves to the righteousness of Christ as his alone plea to the friendship of God. These two dogmas originate in antecedent moral states the most unlike possible to each other, and each is the germ of a distinct, or rather diametrically opposite character. The moral and the intellectual in man's constitution are far too closely interwoven to justify any such rash assertion as we are now considering; and without being able to expatiate more, the assertion runs counter to the general spirit of the Bible, where salvation and belief stand so intimately related to each other—where many are said to perish for lack of knowledge—where we are exhorted to hold fast the form of sound words, and to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints; and lastly, as a special instance of the stress laid upon the doctrine, where Paul says he was determined to know nothing save Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

PART III.—CHAP. VIII.

CONCLUSION.

THE PRAYER.

THOU, O God, art the high and the holy one who inhabitest the recesses of eternity, and the throne on which Thou sittest is a throne of righteousness, and the law which hath issued from Thy mouth is an unalterable law, and whereof Thou hast said that heaven and earth shall pass away before one jot or one tittle of it shall fail. Give us, O Lord, more thoroughly to comprehend that gospel whose admirable expedient it is to reconcile the honour of Thine august government with the salvation of those who have trampled on its authority. Give us to rejoice in that economy under which we sit, where both mercy and truth have met together, and righteousness and peace have entered into fellowship. May we seek after an interest therein, and count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord.

The resurrection of the dead is stated in this chapter to be the principal doctrine of revelation. Such a representation

might suit a perfectly legal economy, and is, I think, fitted to throw into the shade the great characteristic peculiarities of the dispensation under which we sit. It is perhaps not a very determinable question which doctrine is most important, nor would it be very easy to form a scale of precedency along which they might be arranged in the order of their dignity and worth. But I do feel jealous of any representation which removes as it were to the background what I hold the great and distinguishing article of Christianity, the remission of sin through the blood of a satisfying atonement; or what is just an extension or enhancement of the same doctrine, the offer of a righteousness achieved for us by another, and to the rewards of which we are made as welcome as if the righteousness had been achieved by ourselves. This Luther has denominated the article of a standing or falling Church; and we cannot forbear this passing homage to it, though not at all in a condition now for making full disclosure of its preciousness.

Paley says, "Let the constant recurrence to an observation of contrivance, design, and wisdom, in the work of nature, once fix upon our mind the belief of a God, and after that all is easy." The qualification I would lay here is upon Paley's affirmation that all is easy. The truth is, that the belief of God, such as He is, meeting with the conscience of man rightly awake to his own moral state such as it is, lands him in a difficulty insurmountable by human wisdom, and which it is the great object of the gospel of Jesus Christ to do away. I can easily understand how from the postulate of a God there may, by a clear and consecutive train of inference, be established a legal economy under which we behold men as accountable subjects, and immortality as the great theatre of retribution for the deeds done in this scene of earthly probation. But such an economy is death to the hopes of the species, and the object of a better and a distinct economy is to annul the difficulty and the despair which attach to such a state of things. This brings us again to the doctrine of the atonement, as in fact the great turning point upon which the transition of the world from its

ruin to its recovery is suspended, thus justifying all the representations given in Scripture of the exceeding worth and prominence of this tenet, and leading us to comprehend the declaration of Paul, when he said that he was determined to know nothing save Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

I have now done with Paley. I had hoped, but it was a hope founded on a miscalculation, to have been done with him earlier, and to have got room, ere the season was terminated, for the description of another text-book—I mean Horne's Abridgment of his Introduction to the Study of the Sacred Scriptures. It will be a noble compensation for this defect if I can prevail on you, in the course of the summer, to read his larger work. I do not think it possible by any management to have done more in the way of text-book examination than we have actually done. I could not, without injustice to many of the topics, have spent a shorter time either on Butler or Paley; and indeed in reference to the last, I must plead the necessity of being satisfied with the very curt and unsatisfactory way in which I have been obliged to traverse the latter parts of his inestimable performance. By the commencement of next season, if we are spared, I shall have fixed on a more advanced text-book; and now that we have done all which possibly could be done in the time for the elucidation of the question who the letter comes from, the still higher question remains to be resolved, what the letter says.

NOTES

ON

HILL'S LECTURES IN DIVINITY.



NOTES

ON

HILL'S LECTURES IN DIVINITY.

THE PRAYER.

THY throne, O God, is in the heavens, whence Thine eyes do behold, and Thine eyelids do try the children of men. Give us to feel the control of Thine omniscient eye. Give us to bear about in our heart a constant reference both to Thine authority and to Thy presence. May a sense of God and a principle of godliness have at all times a presiding influence over us; and give us to experience the connexion which Thyself hath instituted between a single-hearted devotedness to Thy will and a clear understanding of Thy doctrine. May our eye be single, and then shall our whole body be full of light.

BEFORE entering on the text-book of the present session, and probably, if spared to another year, of the great part of the following session also, let me briefly state the reason why I have selected it from among all the other theological works with which I am acquainted. In the first place, then, I know of no treatise which professes to exhibit the whole range of theological doctrine, and does it in more of a *lucidus ordo* than the one that we have fixed upon. Now this is a great, perhaps the greatest, recommendation of a text-book. I am not

sure if, for such a description of work, it is not of more importance that the various topics shall be presented in right succession, than that a right deliverance shall be given on each of the topics. He whose office it is to expound the text-book, is not restricted to the views or opinions of its author. He may extend, he may modify, he may even refute at pleasure. He may take up the subjects in the very order in which they are presented, and yet on these subjects give nothing but his own independent decision. It is of mighty importance, however, to be under a safe and proper guidance as to the order. Any difference of opinion between the author and the expounder does not affect the benefit of this. It is well to be conducted along a right pathway by one who has traversed the region before, and that, too, along the best tracks for seeing it to advantage, even though he should look upon the scenery with different eyes from the predecessor whom he follows, and should describe the objects differently. Now this is precisely the advantage of a well arranged text-book, like the one we are about to enter. We pledge not ourselves to an implicit adherence to all the arguments of the author. There will not often be a substantial, but often at least a complexional difference betwixt us. But we shall always walk together, though I do not promise that we shall be agreed.

It here occurs to me to say, that the faculty of classifying aright the obvious truths of a science, is not the same with the faculty of penetrating into the recondite truths of it. I think that Dr. Hill had the former faculty in a greater degree than the latter—the power of luminous and comprehensive arrangement among things patent and palpable, rather than the power of drawing from their obscurity those deep and hidden things which lie beneath the surface of observation. The power of distribution is one thing; the power of discernment is another. He who is perfect in the former, will say nothing that is not pertinent; he who lacks the latter power, will say nothing that is profound. Now we hold the former and not the latter to be the appropriate faculty for the construction of a text-book. Dr. Hill, we believe, could not, as Dr. Campbell did, with the eye of

a lynx, have seen and subtilized his way into the sophistries of Hume. But, on the other hand, Dr. Campbell, it is our conjecture, could not have composed a text-book. Both, however, we apprehend to be high faculties, and a great practical service to the study of theology has been rendered by the appearance of the work before us. Had the order of the appearance of these two men on the stage of time been inverted, and had Campbell but adopted Hill as his text-book, we should have had the benefit of a glorious combination; the framework of symmetry and of just proportion which the one had erected, varied by the genius and the acumen and the unnumbered felicities of thought and expression, and altogether the *vis animi* which the other might have infused into it. We hold it another argument in favour of our peculiar method, that in this way such combinations may frequently be realized—that the defects of one man may thus be supplemented by the characteristics of another, and instead of the efficacy of theological instruction being limited by the personal qualities of the teacher alone, you have the advantage of these in compound application, with all that is most excellent and powerful in the theologians of other days.

But before we set foot within the limits of our text-book, we have still another remark to bestow upon it. There is a pervading defect which even Campbell, I fear, would not have supplemented—a certain frigidity about it which the doctrines whereof it treats ought to have quickened into warmth and animation—the want of a *sal evangelicum*, even though it be an evangelical system of truth which is ably and on the whole correctly expounded. Even this, however, has not repelled me from the choice of my text-book. The substance of Christianity is there, although not impregnated with the full force and vitality of Christian sentiment. We have the whole orthodoxy of the subject although not the feeling of it, and perhaps the appropriate and the warrantable feeling might have been nauseated as fanaticism by himself and by hundreds in the Church along with him. It is, I fear, a possible thing to have the letter of orthodoxy without its spirit; and I would certainly

say of the Christianity in these volumes, that taking in all which is implied in the term, it offers not a full or a fair transcript of the Christianity of the New Testament.

We are aware of the vindication which may here be offered, and that is, that a lectureship from the chair of theology professes only to make an intellectual exposition of the subject; that it meddles not with the heart or with the personal sensibilities, but addresses itself to the understanding alone. There is something in this we will admit, though not so much in our estimate as to justify the degree of coldness which we think is characteristic of the work, and far less its indifference on those parts of the system which stand connected with the formation of character, and with the high interests and feelings of personal Christianity. But we gladly accept of the vindication thus far. Though it may not satisfy us as to the work, it ought at least to silence all the adverse judgments of censoriousness in regard to its author. We know not, on the one hand, a more tremendous presumption than that involved in any confident utterance of one man on the denied or the doubtful Christianity of another; but, on the other hand, we must not, in charity to individuals, forget the importance or the truth of this general lesson, that nothing can be more fatal than the state of a mind attached to a form of sound words without the feeling or the faith of them; that it is indeed a most wretched thing to have no other concern about orthodoxy than how to argument it; and I really know no preaching more unproductive than the mere didactic exposition of a system, however faultless, if along with it there be no urgency of personal application, no practical earnestness.

BOOK I.

EVIDENCES OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

INTRODUCTORY DISCOURSE.

THE PRAYER.

WE draw near to Thee, O God, under a deep sense of dependence on Thy will. Thou hast preserved us to the light of another day. Thou hast lengthened out to us the season of grace. We are still in the land of living men—the land of hope and of opportunity, and throughout all the families of which Thy beseeching voice may be heard. May we no longer resist the overtures of reconciliation. To-day, while it is called to-day, may we harden not our hearts, nor aggravate the final doom of our impenitency by the neglect of so great a salvation, or by withstanding the calls and the invitations of the gospel.

I assume, says Dr. Hill, as the groundwork of every religious system, those two great doctrines, that “God is, and that He is a rewarder of those that diligently seek Him.”* I take the first opportunity of the term reward having occurred of adverting to a prejudice which I think has done fatal and extensive injury in theology. The term reward stands associated in our minds with merit, and one of the strongest points of our established orthodoxy is altogether to renounce and abjure it. On the same principle we feel jealous of the term condition, and are often extremely sensitive lest the doctrine of absolute or unconditional grace should be thereby infringed upon. I am quite certain that a misapplied orthodoxy has often in this way operated as a drag on the activities of the Christian life, and more especially laid a very heavy servitude or obstruction on the outset of practical Christianity. We shall often recur to this unfortunate influence with a view to expose it, and shall have our first opportunity for doing so when we come to that part of our course where we shall treat of the bearing which the dogmatic has upon the hortatory theology.

Meanwhile, let me just offer to your notice the distinction

* Hill's Lectures, second edition, vol. i. p. 2.

between a condition of merit and a condition of connexion. The former is unorthodox, by which I invariably mean unscriptural; but as to the latter, the whole scheme and business of Christianity are full of them. No obedience, no doings or seekings of ours can vest us with a legal or a rightful claim to reward; yet that very obedience may be a stepping-stone to the acquisition of the benefit in question. The movement of the disciples to Jerusalem after the resurrection gave them no title to the endowments of Pentecost, and so was not a condition of merit on which they were obtained; but made as it was at the bidding of the Saviour, who commanded them there to go, and to wait till they should receive power from on high, it was a condition of connexion. In like manner, no seeking on our part may give a claim in jurisprudence to the finding of what we seek. The one may not be connected with the other as the work is with the wages, yet the one is connected with the other as the cause is with the consequence. And what we complain of is, that the apprehension lest orthodoxy should be violated by our proposing to enter on the former process often acts as a dead weight on the energy and spirit wherewith we should embark all our diligence and zeal on the latter process. "Seek and ye shall find," is a plain direction, and the effect of our compliance therewith is plainly told us in Scripture. Let us lay upon it no encumbrance whatever, but instantly seek, that in the finding we may obtain the proper and natural reward.

In regard to the books which are recommended at the close of this and the succeeding lectures, I hold this part of our textbook to be extremely valuable; and, without disputing the soundness of the recommendation as there given, the very extension of our theological authorship since, the vast multiplication of works on this, as on all other subjects, may render some choice necessary. In spite, then, of the sterling value of certain publications which have made their appearance since these lists were made, I should rather, on the whole, incline to abridge them. The old in many instances have been superseded by new and better works, and really the immense multiplication even of good books makes the work of selection quite imperative.

There is no overtaking what has been written, and written well, upon the subject of your profession ; and to save a most hurtful waste and expenditure of effort, I would rather confine you, if possible, to what has been written best upon it. On this principle, I would discard Abernethy as being really one of the most meagre performances I ever read. The same thing cannot be said of Cudworth, who, besides the marvellous erudition wherewith he investigates the state of opinion among the ancients, evinces under this the strength of a mind that can take its own vigorous, and original, and independent view of the subject. I should be well enough pleased to know that some three or four amongst you had made a conquest of his Intellectual System, yet speaking as I do to the generality of the class, I would not have them to grapple with it. It appears to me of vastly little consequence what the respective shades of theism and metaphysics were among the philosophers of Greece ; whether Empedocles, for example, held or not the pre-existence of souls, and which were the sages who affirmed and who denied the transmigration of them. There must a deal of this learning fall at length into oblivion and desuetude : the world has not room for it and the daily accumulating treasures of modern authorship together. An immense power and prodigality of scholarship I do admit have been exhibited by Cudworth ; yet in respect of pertinent and sound argument on natural theology and metaphysics, I hold Butler, and Edwards, and Paley to be far beyond him.

There is one matter on which I hold him and Lord Kames to be alike wrong, though in different ways—I mean the doctrine of philosophical necessity ; Cudworth denying it on the ground that it abolishes all moral distinctions, and Kames admitting it, although inclined, I fear, to put up in some degree with this consequence. Leibnitz has, I think, soundly affirmed, and Edwards incontrovertibly argued, that the consequence does not follow. But apart from any errors on this topic, I would say of Cudworth in the general, that the whole style of speculation and argument in which he indulges is now well-nigh become obsolete, and I for one have certainly no wish to

retain it. The same remark applies in great part to the Boyle lectureship, which, though it has given rise to many valuable treatises, is very much overrun with a sort of verbal metaphysics that is now generally, and I think justly, exploded. It is deeply infused with the *a priori* reasoning of Dr. Samuel Clarke.

On the whole, the only books in this course that I would press upon your perusal, are Butler's Analogy and Dr. Paley's Natural Theology.

BOOK I.—CHAP. II.

AUTHENTICITY AND GENUINENESS OF THE BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

THE PRAYER.

O GOD, do Thou aid us in our feeble attempts to ascertain Thy will for our salvation. Give us to approach with solemn reverence the Book of Thy counsel, and to examine both the contents and the credentials thereof with all that attention and moral earnestness which so high an investigation demands. We rejoice that the lights of science and of scholarship rest so abundantly on the question, and we further pray for the light of Thy Spirit in our hearts, that the Word of God may come to us with power, and that we may be transformed by its saving and sanctifying influences into new creatures in Jesus Christ our Lord. Be with us for His sake.—Amen.

There is a very important remark which is exceedingly well put by Turretin* on this subject, and by which he exhibits in a striking light the difference in point of authority and respect between the Apocrypha of the Old Testament and those books of the New Testament on which a doubt or question has been raised. The Christian Church received the books of the Old Testament all at once, after they had obtained undoubted authority, and an authority confirmed by Christ and His apostles, who, if they had observed aught of excess or defect in the Jewish canon of their day, would have pointed it out to their disciples, even as our Saviour exposed their blind adherence to

* See Turretin's Compendium *Theologicæ Didactico-Elenticæ*, Locus ii. sect. 4.

the traditions of the elders, while He never once intimated a complaint against their Scriptures, to which He, on the other hand, and His disciples after Him, frequently made respectful appeals. This is quite decisive to us in regard to the present canon of the Old Testament, besides which it should be observed, that though some few books of the New Testament were disputed by certain of the Churches, (or by a certain part, therefore it may be said of the Christian Church,) in the compact Jewish Church there was no dispute in regard to the present Apocrypha, but a universal sentiment as well as practice that it should be excluded from the canon; and you would do well, ere you suffered a difference of opinion in regard to the controverted books of the New Testament to sway your opinion on the matter, to consider what in all likelihood that difference arose from. You know that the Apostles were scattered widely abroad in the preaching of the gospel, and that the Churches which they established were far asunder from each other. In some cases, then, it is not to be wondered at if an apostolic communication—an epistle received first by some isolated or remote Church in the first instance, should be longer than the rest of finding its way to the notice and acceptance of the Church universal. In which case, what does the non-reception of these writings in certain of the Churches amount to? It just marks the length of time that the information and the evidence connected with these writings took in travelling to them. They held out, in the case of certain of the pieces of the New Testament which made their first appearance at a great distance from themselves, till the satisfactory proofs arrived in weight and abundance enough to overcome their hesitation; for in those days (and it is a great security to us) there was an excess of caution upon this subject, and the proofs at length did come, when the whole Christian Church settled down with the adoption of our present canon in all its parts. A New Testament book is not the less genuine because longer of being received by one Church than another, any more than an event in France is the less true because longer of being heard of in America than in England.

BOOK I.—CHAP. IV.

DIRECT OR EXTERNAL EVIDENCE OF CHRISTIANITY.—MIRACLES.

THE PRAYER.

THOU, O God, art the source of light and of life, and it is Thine inspiration which giveth understanding. In Thy light may we clearly see light: and give us to behold in all Thy dealings, both with the Church and the world, the overruling providence, the great and consistent plan of a Being who has some great purpose to serve in the march of history and of human affairs. We bless Thee for the preservation of Thy holy word, and for the transmission both of its contents and credentials to these latter ends of the world. May it dwell in us richly in all wisdom, and amid all the perplexities of life may we ever find it a light to our feet, and a lamp to our paths.

You perfectly understand how I would be disposed to settle the matter of the evidence of miracles. A miracle I hold to be a good, perhaps the very highest of all presumptions. I would demur at receiving it as an absolute proof of the fact that he who works it has a commission from God, or that he has a conclusive and altogether incontrovertible claim to be entertained and listened to as His messenger. Anterior to your special acquaintance with the particulars of the communication wherewith he is charged, your proper attitude is to listen to him, in the first instance, as you would to the accredited ambassador of a prince; but I can imagine the substance of the message to be such as to nullify all the evidence that lay in the first and outward credentials, even as I can imagine of an earthly ambassador, that after having obtained acceptance and belief, on the ground of producing the usual seal of the commission from his superior, the overtures may be so utterly at variance with all that is certainly known of the character and policy of his king, as even to countervail the otherwise irresistible proof of their genuineness. Such a case as this can certainly be conceived, and I shall endeavour to dispose of it in my lecture on Thursday, when I propose to consider the ligament which connects the truth or authority of the doctrine with the fact of the miracle

under whose sanction the doctrine is promulgated. I would scarcely call a proof absolute, if liable to be set aside by aught that might transpire on any subsequent examination. Should a professed revelation given under the cover of a miracle proclaim a law, for example, whose enactments reversed all the articles of the decalogue, or should it affirm as truths certain propositions which I know experimentally or mathematically to be false, this would place me in some sort of strange and wildering dilemma, and I should certainly feel that if it did not upset the authority given by the miracle, at the very least it would completely neutralize it.

We admit it as very unlikely that such a supposition should ever be realized, and just in proportion to the unlikelihood is the strength of the presumption or probability on the side of the miracle as being the evidence of a divine interposition. But whether we agree with Marsh, in thinking that such an incongruity can never happen, or with other theologians who think it possible, but who, if asked to state the numerical deduction which this probability would make from certainty, would themselves be startled by the affirmation, that once in a thousand times the monstrous imagination might be verified. I say, whichever of the two opinions you adopt, the question practically would terminate and be resolved in the very same way. If because certain of the miracle, you are certain that he who wrought it is from God, the obligation to attend to its overtures is altogether unqualified, and the obligation is not sensibly attenuated, even if, because certain of the miracle, you are not absolutely but within a small fraction of being certain that it is the pledge of God being with the performer of it. In either case, the obligation to give the message a hearing is clear, and unequivocal, and imperative; and heedlessness to the subject-matter of the testimony, after such an exhibition as this, would stamp, either on the one supposition or the other, the condemnation of resolved impiety on him who was guilty of it.

When there is a clear unequivocal miracle on the side of a professed message from Heaven, on the one supposition either

the certainty is so absolute, or on the other supposition, the presumption is so great, as to convict of a criminal indifference to God him who is chargeable with a contemptuous disregard of it. "If I had not done these works, they had not had sin." Still it speaks in favour of the second supposition, that when the allegation was made by the enemies of our Saviour, that He cast out devils by the prince of devils, our Saviour did not refuse to entertain it as if standing on the absolute and incontrovertible nature of miraculous evidence. He takes it up and replies to it; and it is instructive to observe that He fetches a reply from the nature of the doctrine which He promulgated, or in other words, that He meets the objection against the outward credentials of the message wherewith he was charged, with an argument drawn from the inward contents of it. If Satan were divided against himself, his kingdom could not stand.

The miracles then stamped a condemnation on those who refused to listen to the message, and we may well add, that they perform the same function still. The sound and admirable, and even in the mere literary sense of the word, the attractive authorship of England on the Christian side of the deistical controversy, will be a witness against the infidelity or even the practical irreligion of those who had the means of consulting it, and being convinced thereby of the reality of the Christian miracles. Their habitual inattention to a book accompanied with such credentials—credentials which, had they been at the pains to unravel and to examine them, would have laid open the most satisfactory proofs of the divinity that accompanied it—this will stamp on their unbelief its decisive and most righteous condemnation. But it follows not that this is the only channel through which we can arrive at a certainty of the Bible being a Divine revelation, or that it is universally requisite that men should study the historical evidences of Christianity ere they can attain a rational conviction of the truth of Christianity, thus leaving to a vast majority of the population no other faith than the faith of passive credulity, of habit, and hereditary prejudice. We have already seen how much can be

argumentatively done by the internal contents of the message. We have already seen how they may have enough of argumentative power to neutralize the objections taken against the miracles. But they have more than this. They have that whereon to rear a positive argument in behalf of the truth. We can gather from the examination of them not merely the absence of all such marks as might indicate an evil or a deceitful spirit to have had to do with the miracles by which the book was ushered into the world ; but we might gather from the examination of them such positive marks of a good and a great spirit, such evidences of a profound acquaintance with the heart of man, along with such decisive indications both of the purity of its lessons and their power to transform sinful man into a holy and heavenly aspirant after all that is good, as fully to convince the reader that the book which he is reading emanated from one who is incapable of deceiving ; that it came therefore from the source whence throughout all its pages it professes to have come, even from the fountain of light and truth, the pure and high sanctuary of God.

BOOK I.—CHAP. V.

ILLUSTRATION OF THE EVIDENCES OF CHRISTIANITY.

THE PRAYER.

TEACH us, O God, to acknowledge Thee in all our ways, and to lean not on our own understandings. May we not place our confidence in the wisdom of intellect. Teach us the higher wisdom of piety. In our study of the mental relations and dependencies, may we not overlook the relation of the thing that is formed to Him who hath formed it, the absolute and entire dependence of the creature on the Creator. We pray for the simple manifestation to our eyes of the simple truths of Thy Bible, and as it tells us of heaven and hell, of time and eternity, of sin and the Saviour, may we apprehend as we ought, may we feel as we ought.

I am not sure that the description of the raising of Lazarus, given by Dr. Hill in this chapter, is altogether a happy or

successful effort on the part of our author. However much he may have been warranted to feel as he expressed, yet it follows not that his expression of these feelings should create a full or adequate sympathy in the mind of his readers. And so what we ourselves feel or perceive in our own direct attentive perusal of the narrative, may far exceed aught that we can catch by reflection from the description here before us. I feel this to be one of the least satisfactory passages in our text-book, when viewed in the light of an argument. It seems more an exertion of fine writing than of fine analysis, and I think bears the mark of having passed through the pulpit before it was turned into a prelection from the chair. I dispute not that the traits of character and the circumstantiality of the incidents in this chapter, will give the discerning reader a warm and living character of reality to the whole on his own perusal of it, however inadequately the impression may in this instance have been handled as it were by the intermediate person, who, acting the part of an expounder, stands between the Scripture and his own intelligence or feeling.

“Before leaving the circumstances of the miracle, I would observe, that however ably such objections as I have mentioned may be answered, there is much caution to be used in stating them to a Christian assembly. It is very improper to communicate to the people all the extravagant frivolous conceits that have been broached by the enemies of Christianity. The objection may remain with them after they have forgotten the answer, and their faith may be shaken by finding that it has received so many attacks.”—Vol. i. p. 134.

This is a very sound and judicious advice, and I am not sure but I would carry it further than is done in the text-book. I am not only not fond of perplexing the minds of the people by these minuter difficulties, but I doubt if the literary or argumentative evidence is a befitting topic for the pulpit at all. The tendency of the youthful preacher, when warm from the Hall, is to prepare and to preach sermons on the leading topics of the deistical controversy, and sometimes even to come forth with the demonstrations, the merely academic demonstrations,

of natural theology. It is not stripping the expositions of the pulpit of evidence, and of sufficient evidence, even though the historical argument, or indeed any formal argument whatever, should form no part of them. If, as we believe, the main credentials of Christianity lie in its substance and contents, then you, in the simple unfolding of these contents, are in fact presenting them with the credentials, although you never offer them to their notice as credentials, but simply as truths, which do in fact carry the belief by their own manifestation to the consciences of the people. In making demonstration of their guilt, in making proposal to them of the offered remedy, in representing the danger of those who reject the Saviour, in urging the duty of those who have embraced Him—when thus employed, you are dealing with what I would call the great elements of preaching, and it is a mistake, that because not formally descanting on the evidence, you are therefore labouring to form a Christianity among your people without evidence. In the language of the Apostle, what you thus preach can commend itself to every man's conscience, and the resulting faith is neither the faith of imagination nor of servile compliance with authority, but a faith which has a substantial and vindicable ground of evidence to rest upon, and not the less substantial and vindicable, though not one word about the vindication ever passes betwixt you and the people whom you are the instrument of Christianizing.

The most striking example of the inapplicable introduction of an academic subject into the pulpit that I remember to have heard of, occurred many years ago in the west of Scotland, when a preacher, on receiving a presentation to a country parish, preached his first and customary sermon previous to the moderation of the call. The people were not, even from the first, very much prepossessed in his favour, and he unfortunately did not make ground amongst them by this earliest exhibition of his gifts, he having selected for the topic of his pulpit demonstration the immateriality of the soul. This had the effect of ripening and confirming their disinclination into a violent antipathy, which carried them so far, that they lodged

with the Presbytery a formal complaint against him, containing a series of heavy charges, where, among other articles of their indictment, they alleged that he told them the soul was immaterial, which, according to their version of it, was tantamount to telling them that it was not material whether they had souls or no.

BOOK I.—CHAP. VI.

EXTERNAL EVIDENCE OF CHRISTIANITY.—PROPHECY.

THE PRAYER.

THY throne, O God, is in the heavens, and Thy footstool upon earth; and the ways of Thy providence, conducted though they be with perfect wisdom, are to us unsearchable. But we rejoice that though clouds and darkness are round about Thee, Thou hast given an assurance of Thy goodwill to the children of men, and hast made discovery in the gospel of Thy Son, of the blended love and holiness of Thy nature. We desire to read Thy character in the work of our redemption, and we bless Thy name, that by truth and mercy having met together there, and righteousness and peace having entered into fellowship, Thou canst at once be a just God and a Saviour.

There is one thing here worth the adverting to. The multiplication of the evidence, the number of its different kinds, if all made out, certainly enhances, and that at a rate far more prodigious than the generality of people are aware of, the whole strength of the argument for Christianity. If the probability on the side of the Christian religion, from its miracles alone, be as a thousand to one, and from its prophecies alone, be also as a thousand to one, the coincidence of both gives the assurance of a million to one that Christianity is true. But, on the other hand, you will remark that this multitude of evidence thus laid claim to, makes the case all the more vulnerable. Should some glaring misprophecy, for example, annihilate that branch of the evidence, it would effect a greater

mischief to the cause than the mere detraction of one part of the argument—it, in fact, would reach a general blow to the religion itself. It would have the same effect, for instance, on the argument from miracles, that the occurrence of a something immoral or false in the substance of the revelation would have. Such a thing would not only weaken or destroy the internal evidence, it would, as we have already seen, nullify all the external evidence together. And the mischief that could be done by the inculcation of what we know to be a false doctrine, or felt to be a false principle of morality, would certainly be incurred also by the deliverance of what we saw turned out to be a false prophecy. So that the same diversity of evidence, which, if all made out, strengthens inconceivably the case, before it is made out puts that case on the proportionally greater hazard of a fearful precariousness. It is a strong presumption in favour of Christianity that the hazard is so fearlessly incurred. There is a striking contrast here between the simple unembarrassed manner of all Scripture when touching either on its miracles or prophecies, or precepts and principles, and the anxious explanations of the Alcoran on the subject of its own want of miraculous evidence. To hazard the ordeal of such a multiple examination, and come out untouched, or rather vindicated in all the branches of it—to make so wide and open an exposure as it does of itself, throwing itself abroad over the wide domain both of nature and of history, and making itself liable to be confronted at all hands with authors innumerable, and along such a lapse, too, of many generations—to begin its narrative with the commencement of the world, and shoot forward its predictions to the end of it, and yet to have sustained such a marvellous accordancy both with the certainties of the past and the gradual developments of the future, there is certainly in all this a most impressive general consideration on the side both of the Jewish and Christian revelations, which if they have incurred a thousandfold risk by varying and multiplying their pretensions as they have done, by substantiating these pretensions come forth with greatly more than a thousandfold strength of vindicated authority in consequence.

But there is more than this. Not only does the case gain prodigiously by this complication of its evidences when a distinct argument is gathered from each of its branches, there is in some of these separate branches, looked at singly, an immense accumulation of proof just from the number of distinct contingencies that must meet in order to make out the evidence in question. Nowhere is this more remarkable than in the evidence of prophecy. Take, for example, the single prophecy of the birth of our Saviour at Bethlehem—what a prodigious evidence arises merely from the two parts of place and time ! That the birth should have taken place anywhere in Judea of a person who might substantiate the claims of a Divine messenger was in itself a very hazardous position. But how the hazard is multiplied by the mere specification of the town—multiplied at least a hundredfold should you only suppose the hundred towns or villages in the whole country. And, in like manner, there was risk in the prediction of such a personage within five hundred years from the time of its utterance, but the risk is augmented at least five hundredfold by the venturing on a particular year for the fulfilment of this event. The combination of the two gives immense force of evidence to both when they are thus found together. And then just think of the many contingencies that meet together, all of them beyond the reach of the possibility of human forethought, and each of them necessary to the determination of the birth at the place where it happened. The politics of a distant government had a share in this accomplishment. It hinged on a decree from Cæsar Augustus ; and when one recollects that the providence of God in the affairs of the world was thus concerned, it seems strongly to mark a common origin for the providence and for the prophecy. The multiple evidence of combination is brought out with astonishing force when a circumstantial prophecy quadrates with a narrative alike circumstantial. Take, for example, the account of our Saviour's crucifixion, and though there were only ten circumstances of the narrative in the New Testament that tallied with the pre-intimations of the Old, what a mighty product of evidence may be

grounded upon this ! Let any man express in numbers the improbability that without inspiration any one should know, five hundred years before it happened, of the death that the teacher of the new revelation was to undergo, of the vinegar that was to be administered to Him, of the partition of His vesture by lot, of the mockery that was to assail Him on all sides, nevertheless of the honourable burial that He was to receive, and finally, of some wondrous enlargement that, after all this deep humiliation, was to come upon Him and upon His cause, with a number of nicer circumstances, which, in very proportion to their nicety, enhance to an incalculable amount the force of the argument. If there be ten thousand chances against one human being knowing of a single circumstance such as any of these respecting another at the distance of half a millennium, what a vast multiplication of chances against his knowing them all ! What an evidence is thus afforded for the preternatural communications of a higher intelligence than his own—what a miracle of knowledge is thus exhibited—what a hopeless superiority over all the anticipations of human sagacity or skill—what a palpable demonstration that here must have been the suggestion of Him who knoweth the end from the beginning, here must have been the omniscience of a God !

We hold that the sound mode of proposing an argument is to rest it, in the first instance, on the primary and direct prophecies, and then, after having propped the revelation upon this branch of the prophecy alone, with the other evidence, whether miraculous or internal, which is to confirm and support it, to accept of its informations as to secondary or special prophecies, and then prosecute an inquiry into these. We can abundantly afford to give up or to postpone the evidence of the secondary prophecies at the outset of our investigation into the subject, after which, having learned from revelation itself whether there be other prophecies that had a double sense and a double fulfilment, they would come afterwards as the next, and we have no doubt you would feel it a most interesting topic of inquiry. We hold this to be a more cautious, and wiser, and sounder management of the case than to come forth *ab initio* with any strenuous asser-

tion on the subject of double prophecies, though the innumerable harmonies exhibited by these between the old and the new dispensations must serve afterwards to throw an augmented and a confirmatory light over the whole, and irresistibly, we believe, to impress the conviction of the one scheme and the one great pervading spirit that unfolds and animates the whole series of these revelations.

Proceeding, then, in this order, we would take the information of Paul as to the typical nature of the ceremonies and the ritual observances of Judaism. It is needless to inquire in how far we might have guessed this from the analogy between the rites of the Old and the doctrines of the New Testament. Any conjecture is superseded by the information accredited by the evidence of the direct prophecies, and all the other evidences in behalf of Christianity; and if proceeding on this information, you enter on the study of the topic, I promise you a most pleasing walk of investigation, and one in which I am persuaded you will find a number of recondite symphonies that go irresistibly to impress, and that without fancy or fanaticism at all, the operations of a high and hidden wisdom in the construction of the symbolical apparatus which so beautifully embodied and at length so luminously effloresced in the truths of a doctrinal and spiritual religion. You will remember that Moses constructed the tabernacle according to the pattern showed him in the Mount, and no one will suppose that it was caprice or contingency which dictated this. And we are told by Paul, in his Epistle to the Hebrews, a part of Scripture worthy of your profoundest attention, that the tabernacle and the vessels were the patterns of things in the heavens, and as such they must form a befitting representation of these things. I will not enter into particulars, but sure I am that between the sacrifices of Judaism and the great sacrifice made for the sins of the world—between the scape-goat who carried the sins of the people into the wilderness, where there was no more mention made of them, and the deliverance effected by Him who bare our transgressions, and on whom God laid the iniquity of us all—between the entrance of the High Priest into the holiest of

all, the innermost sanctuary of the temple, and the entrance made by our great Forerunner into the sanctuary of heaven, the pavilion of the residence of the Most High—between the burning of incense within the house at the time when the people in the outer court were at their prayers, and the doctrine of the Saviour's merits to perfume the supplications of the faithful, and make them rise with acceptance to the throne;—between these peculiarities of Judaism, I say, and a number of their counterparts in Christianity that might be specified, there is such a resemblance as would, on the one hand, impress on the intelligent worshipper of the old dispensation the sense and spirit of the enlightened dispensation that came after it; and as, on the other hand, affords a most delightful contemplation to the saints and Christian students of the present day, when they recognise the precious and peculiar truths of the Christian religion under the dress and the drapery of Judaism.

Without entering on the general and philosophic consideration of analogy, and why it may be expected to run through all the dispensations of God, and to impress upon them all the one character of wisdom and general goodness which belongs to Him; without adducing this, I say, in vindication of the typical character of the Mosaic ritual, there is at least one obvious subserviency that is gained by such an institution. It goes to identify the two religions of Judaism and Christianity, in as far as the essential views which they served to impress of the Divinity are concerned. The one differs from the other, but only in degree and not in kind, as a full-grown man differs from a babe, or the expansion of any natural organization differs from the rudimental germ which contains all the parts and characteristics that enter into the coming development. More particularly would the sacrifices impress on the Jewish worshippers of these days both the justice and the placability of God—His hatred of sin, yet His readiness, by a fixed and consecrated way of access, to take the sinner back into acceptance. The book of Psalms may be regarded as a phenomenon strikingly illustrative of this, and proving most satisfactorily that the essential spirit and principles of Christianity entered

into the mental exercises and experiences of the worshipper of that age; while, on the other hand, the perfect congeniality and taste wherewith even the most enlightened Christians of the present time trace the accordancies, whether more palpable or more delicate, that subsist between the two religions, cannot fail, even previous to any investigation or any personal finding of our own upon the subject, to prepossess us at least with the likelihood of their being a real groundwork in the actual state of the case for these types and double prophecies, at least worthy of our respectful examination.

BOOK I.—CHAP. VII.

PREDICTIONS DELIVERED BY JESUS.

THE PRAYER.

THOU art the high and the Holy One who inhabitest the precincts of eternity, yet Thou hast respect to the children of men, Thou despisest not the work of Thine own hands, and Thou lovest to dwell with him who is of a devout and lowly spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the devout one. We rejoice that Thou hast softened the awe of Thy greatness by the enduring representations which Thou hast given of Thy good-will even to the guiltiest of us all; and we desire to learn of Thee, O God, in that message of offered reconciliation which Thou hast sent into the world. Do Thou assist our efforts to seek after Thee, if haply we may find Thee.

There is certainly much of the gratuitous often in the interpretations which men attempt to give of prophecy; and, more especially, when they try to find a definite meaning in some palpable and familiar thing for an expression of obscure generalities. It is not to be wondered that this should often fail in the hand of mere human expounders, particularly before that additional light has been cast upon prophecy which its fulfilment is invariably sure to reflect on the prediction to which it corresponds. But I would have you to remark here, that how-

ever false, and sometimes ludicrous, the particular failures may be, still, speaking of it as a general style of interpretation, it is sanctioned here by the example of the Saviour. Nothing could, I believe, be more susceptible of a wrong and mistaken application than a phrase so vague as the abomination of desolation; but how emphatically expressive it is, after all, of the very thing to which our Saviour hath applied it—the standards of the Roman army, held in particular detestation by the Jews because of the idolatrous devices which surmounted them, and which, preceding, as they did, the furious and merciless host of conquerors, could not have been more graphically rendered by any other description than the abomination that maketh desolate.

We have no doubt in our own minds, that in the destruction of Jerusalem is typified the end of the world, and so that he who utters the prophecy respecting it uttered a prophecy with a double sense, not thereby, as Davidson says, admitting a license to gratuitous fancy in the interpretation of it, but, in fact, as requiring a twofold truth in the fulfilment of it, multiplying the chances against this more complex accomplishment, and so making it all the more decisive of the inspiration from which it emanated. Certain it is, that having respect only to the first of the fulfilments, and counting it but as a single prophecy, the minute and marvellous coincidence in so many continuous circumstances between the solemn prediction of the Prophet, who wept over the calamities which He foretold, and the appalling narrative of the historian, gives a more decided character of prophetic truth to the whole than is perhaps to be met with in all the other examples, striking as they are, whether in the Old or New Testament. And the evidence grounded on this is most assuredly not diluted—is not affected at all, in fact, by the circumstance of their having another and ulterior fulfilment still in reserve. We who live between the two may well regard the one as the pledge of the other, and when not the *συντέλεια του αἰῶνος*, the end of the Jewish dispensation, but the antitype to this, the real end of the world approaches, they who read and understand the signs of the times,

and observe the higher, but still the corresponding tokens which shall usher in the destruction of our present system, will, we have no doubt, from the very chapters which relate to the destruction of Jerusalem, be emphatically warned of what is before them, and learn with deeper impression than ever the necessity of betaking themselves to the only place of refuge, of fleeing from the wrath that is to come. The double sense of the prophecy will not embarrass the prospect—it will, in fact, impress it the more upon their fears or their hopes, when, over and above the verbal prophecy, the harmony of the two great events, one completed and the other in progress, will serve still more powerfully to impress that the same providence and power which gave such awful reality to the one, will be manifested in a like dread accomplishment of both.

We are aware of the argument on which they who would restrict every prophecy to a single sense might explain the general character of exaggeration that runs through the prediction, and which seems to exalt it above the dimensions, as it were, of the first or literal fulfilment. They might hold that this is altogether due to the symbolic language of prophecy, the language employed to describe beforehand the event in question, not because it symbolizes any event beyond it, but simply because, in the proper and peculiar nomenclature of the subject, it describes beforehand the one, and the only one thing which the prophecy has to do with. It is thus that, though no literal earthquakes had happened anterior to the destruction of Jerusalem, yet we are to hold the prophecy respecting it as exhausted if there happened political revolutions, of which earthquakes in prophetic language are the symbol; or if there was no personal coming of the Son of man, still we have nothing more to look for in connexion with this prophecy, seeing that it is but a way of expressing any great or signal dispensation; or, if the sun and moon were not literally darkened, nor did the stars fall, yet we are to count on no higher and further accomplishment than we have had already, because the sun and the moon but represent, in well-known prophetic phrase, the civil and ecclesiastical polity of a people, and the falling of

the stars from heaven but the degradation of those upper dignities and powers which had long been fixed in the political hemisphere. In spite, however, of these explanations, the opinion abides with us, and, we believe, with every plain reader of the New Testament. On the particular subject of this prophecy I have not heard it remarked, but I think, would you read the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth chapters *in continuo*, you could not resist the impression of a continuity of subject, illustrated, first, by the predicted historical event, and the parable in evident connexion therewith; secondly, by another parable, the moral of which is almost identically in the same words with the moral of the prophecy—"Watch ye, therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour when the Son of man cometh;" thirdly, by still another parable, where the fate of the unprofitable servant is represented in terms of precise similarity with the fate of the evil servant in the short parable appended to the prophecy; and, last of all, by what everybody understands to be a description of the literal day of judgment, ushered in by the act of the Son of man coming in His glory, the very expression made use of in the prophecy where it is said—They shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory. There is, in fact, a progressive expansion of light in these successive representations of the same great and ultimate event, beginning with the prophecy of the destruction at hand, and going forward from one exposition of the matter to another, till it terminates with the direct announcement of that far mightier desolation which is to take place at the end of our world.

BOOK I.—CHAP. VIII.

RESURRECTION OF CHRIST.

THE PRAYER.

WE bless Thee, O God, for the confirmation Thou hast given of all our hopes of immortality by having raised Jesus from the dead. We desire to see in His resurrection the strongest evidence and exemplification of the doctrine that we shall rise also. Give us to live by the powers of a world to come, to feel the littleness of time and the greatness of eternity, to make use of this world not as a resting-place but as a road; and may every new day, every rising morn, discern our growing meetness for the inheritance of the saints in light. Be with us now and ever.—Amen.

I before hinted at the doctrinal importance of certain historical steps in the great process and work of our redemption by Jesus Christ. The death, the decease to be accomplished at Jerusalem—that high topic of celestial converse between the Saviour and His visitors from heaven on the mount of transfiguration—this death, I say, the chief of those sufferings that were among the big and the mysterious things which angels desired to look into, we may be sure that it was not merely as an event, a naked though a great and an interesting event, they deemed it as so worthy of their regard; but because of its being an event charged with principle, because there was in it a manifestation of the character of the Godhead, because there hung upon it a deep and difficult question of jurisprudence, on the determination of which both the hopes of our outcast species and the dignity of heaven's high government were suspended. It is the doctrine of that death being an atonement which gives the alone adequate explanation even of the historical circumstances that stood associated with it, of the deep agony in the garden, of the prospective shrinking felt and experienced in the anticipation of it by Him who, with all the energies of His own inherent Divinity to sustain Him, nevertheless stood appalled at the view of His approaching desertion—of the

darkness, and the earthquake, and the rending of the veil, and the resurrection of men from their graves, and the solemn annunciation given with His last breath—that it was finished. It peculiarly comports with the character of the Christian dispensation that its doctrines just like its evidences should be thus embodied in facts. And passing on from the fact of the death to the fact of the resurrection, you will find, in like manner, that sentiment, and principle, and doctrinal truth may be deduced from it. He is said to have been raised by the power of the Father, thereby testifying His acceptance of the propitiation that had been made for the sins of the world, opening as it were with His own hand the prison door, and so signifying that the penalties which He undertook of the broken law had been fully borne, representing by symbol and by action the perfect sufficiency of that redemption on which every man is invited to rest all his dependence and all his hopes. I feel quite assured that your pulpit demonstrations on these high topics will become greatly more effective by your following of Scripture in the exhibitions which you give of them; and if, instead of confining yourselves to the abstract employment of setting forth in mere argument the articles of theology, you set them forth even as the Bible does, embodied in narrative, and pictured, as it were, in the successive steps of a real and living history. For, pursue the history farther, and you will still find it to be animated by principle, and to speak in deeds the most vital and substantial of these truths which enter into the creed of a disciple. When He rose to the Father's right hand, we are not merely told by this of His office as intercessor and of His mediatorial employment there in adding the incense of His merits to the supplications of His followers, but connecting His entrance into heaven with the egress thence of the Spirit upon earth, we have the whole economy of man's restoration firmly and substantially, because historically, set forth in a series of acts, or by one great action, each evolution of the same inseparably connected with all that went before it, and so proving in its own peculiar way that man's justification must be followed up by his sanctification—that not a creature can be reconciled

without being regenerated, else Christ is of none effect to him. I would bid you mark well the explanation which Peter gives of the phenomenon of the first great effusion of the Holy Spirit after the resurrection. This, he says to the multitude, is the promise of the Father to you and to your children, and to as many as the Lord our God shall call; enabling you to refute from a single verse the whole of that meagre imagination advocated by Benson and others, as if the ministration of the Holy Spirit were confined to the first ages of Christianity, and the whole effect of these ministrations was the power of working miracles—a power which in a single generation or two wholly disappeared, as if the dispensation in fact of the Holy Ghost formed no permanent part of the economy of the Christian Church, and the descent of His influences on every believer did not form as indispensable a part of his Christianity as the acceptance of the offered forgiveness through the blood of Him who died the just for the unjust. I hold in greatest value the doctrinal declarations of the Bible; but be assured that what may be termed the doctrinal facts of the Bible are not to be overlooked by you, and by teaching as it were even as Scripture itself does the abstract truths in the history, you are enabled to render them in a way highly impressive not merely to the popular, but I would say to all understandings.

BOOK I.—CHAP. IX.—SECT. IV.

MEASURE OF EFFECT PRODUCED BY THE MEANS EMPLOYED IN PROPAGATING THE GOSPEL—OBJECTIONS DRAWN FROM IT—ANSWERS.

THE PRAYER.

THOU hast not left Thyself, O God, without a witness in the world ; for Thy Word is nigh to us, even that Word which Thou hast exalted above all Thy name. We bless Thee that when our Saviour left the world, He left this precious legacy behind Him, and hath given us both the Scripture that we may read, and the Spirit to illuminate that Scripture. We would place ourselves under the teaching that He hath ordained, and of which He said it was more than an equivalent for His own personal presence upon earth. We would peruse assiduously the sacred record which has been transmitted to us, and we would pray assiduously for that Spirit which is given to us, and who alone can open our understandings to understand it.

This first reply to the set of objections stated in vol. i. p. 290 of our text-book, is perfectly sufficient of itself, and might have superseded the following ones, though they too, particularly the second and third, are in themselves exceedingly pertinent and powerful. But confining our attention at present to the first, you will not fail to perceive in the objection, on the one hand, and in the redarguing by which it is met, what I call a fair characteristic exemplification of the respective arguments by which the two causes are propped, of Deism and Christianity. They exhibit just the difference between the presumptuous and the experimental. The objection proceeds on our supposed previous knowledge of the counsels of heaven. The vindication proceeds on our actual knowledge of what took place on earth. The one is prompted by our imagination of what is best suited to the policy of God's high administration, the other has proceeded from the solid materials of the experience that we have had in the matters daily and familiarly acted on earth's lowly platform. In this part of the contro-

versy, hypothesis and history stand contrasted with each other ; and it is just this contrast, I think, which marks throughout the one side and the other of this momentous question. Were it a question of science, there would not be the hesitation of one moment on which side the preference was due, and all I labour to establish is, that the principle of the decision is the same in a question of theology, to convince you that we—reasoning on what we know of human nature, and what we observe of the characteristic differences between the true and the false in the testimony of men—are in truth the experimentalists, and that they, obtruding into mysteries beyond the ken of our faculties, are in truth the theorists. This difference will at length come to be more felt and recognised, so as to save the labour of a formal and lengthened refutation to many an infidel argument which has met with serious entertainment in other days. It is thus, I think, that much of the deistical controversy will at length be superseded and become obsolete as having had its day, but which is now forgotten, or only remembered as part of the literature of the subject. This is beginning to be verified even of Gibbon's secondary causes, which, though grounded on affirmations respecting man and the things of man, are felt to be quite overborne by the direct force of the historical testimony, and therefore much more verified of such arguments as the one now before us, where the same historical evidence is now brought to bear, and is felt to overbear instantly all the unauthorized fancies of infidels respecting the things of God. Observe that these questions imply an expectation that while human works admit of preparation, the works of God will be done instantly.

The great objects of the Divine administration are arrived at by slow but lengthened and magnificent progressions. The kingdom of grace differs not in this respect from what we observe in the kingdoms of providence and nature. Along the march of history we find that many centuries have elapsed in bringing onward the progress of knowledge and civilisation in the arts, and one cannot say that they are yet perfected. That mighty God who presides over the mighty cycles and

periods of astronomy, and with whom a thousand years are as one day, and one day as a thousand years, is not to be measured by the impatience of man, or by any human standard of calculation whatever. We have evidently got on a field where Deists have nought but the gratuitous and the conjectural to oppose to us ; and I do think it quite enough to plead the argument of Butler, so as to remove or silence the positive objection without attempting any positive solution, which is really attempted, in the fourth reply, thereby imparting so far the same shadowy and hypothetical character to the reasoning of the Christian advocates that belongs in this instance to the reasoning of the infidel.

I look on this fourth reply as unsatisfactory, not only from the presumptuous attempt to give a positive and peremptory solution of the objection in question—an objection that would be far better placed *hors de combat* by the analogical argument or even by the *argumentum ab ignorantia*, but because there is really much, I think, of false and mistaken principle in this whole paragraph on the subject of the propagation of Christianity, and on what that really and experimentally is which ensures success to the missionary enterprise. I hold it to be both doctrinally and experimentally untrue, that a preparatory civilisation is necessary ere the human mind be in a state of readiness for the reception of the gospel of Jesus Christ. I do not believe that this was the sentiment of Paul, who professed himself a debtor both to the barbarian and the Greek ; and it is furthermore a sentiment belied by the actual history of Christianization from the first ages of our faith down to the present day. It is a great question, because connected with the power of the internal evidence, and because on its settlement there depends another and a most momentous question, whether a man's Christianity is originated by the power of a historical argument operating on the ordinary faculties of his understanding, or whether it originates in the manifestation of its own truth brought home to the understanding and the heart by the operation of the Holy Spirit. The way in which this question is decided serves in my apprehension to mark the difference

between a meagre and a vital substantial theology, and we cannot help being struck with observing how much the deliverance of our author is at one with that of men who, however accomplished in general literature, are not certainly the best informed on those matters which peculiarly and professionally belong to the subject of Christianity.

We have often said of an experiment that it may be as instructive by its failure as by its success. There was an attempt made by the Quakers some twenty years ago, to institute a process of mere civilisation and general instruction among the Indians of North America. It was much lauded by the Edinburgh Reviewers, both for its principle and for the success which was said to have attended it, and I have no doubt was greatly more congenial to the taste of many, because of its freedom from the hateful ingredient of evangelism. A scheme which looked at once to be rational and hopeful, had much to recommend it in the eyes of those who nauseate the whole enterprise of our missionaries, and in an age when experience is deified as the test of truth, certainly ought to have fixed upon it the regard of all who at once were zealous in philanthropy, and enlarged and enlightened in philosophy. But the truth is, that for many years we have heard nothing of this adventure. In my own mind it augured ill, that notwithstanding all my inquiries, I could obtain no information respecting it till very lately. We have been assured by a respectable clergyman in the Western States of America, that it issued in no permanent result whatever.—(Edinburgh Review, vols. viii. p. 445; xv. p. 498.)

But a still more egregious mistake on the subject of missions and missionaries, was committed in their notice of another body of Christians—I mean the Moravians. They have now been at work for about a hundred years, and none more cordial and unanimous than they in declaring that the great instrument of their success, even among the most wild and unlettered savages, is the adaptation to their consciences of all that is most peculiar, and what the mere *savant* would designate as most mysterious in the doctrines of Christianity. The truth is, that they at one time attempted the other way of it, the

way of gradual and rational preparation, set forth in the text-book, and most egregiously failed. Their present peculiar mode, the success of which has now become so palpable to all the world, they experimentally felt their way to ; and it is their own public avowal, that when they first come into contact with barbarians, it is among the very earliest of their initial measures to preach Christ to them, and Him crucified. In other words, they just proceed with them as all other missionaries do ; and the reason why they and not the others stand forth as the objects of a popular and sentimental admiration, is, that they have had time to work up a more striking and conspicuous result. The Christianity which they have, by their faithful and peculiar teaching, been the instruments of depositing in the heart of their converts, has now fully effloresced upon their visible history, and being sufficiently numerous to assemble in villages, the exhibition has at length become broad enough to strike the general eye, and to draw forth a tribute of eloquent admiration and delight even from the authors of sentimental journeys. The most striking example of this which occurs to us is that of Lichtenstein, who breaks forth into a strain of impassioned but of very ignorant admiration, when in his travels through South Africa he paid a visit to a Moravian establishment, and who infected his reviewer with a kindred spirit of admiration.—(Edinburgh Review, vol. xxi. pp. 64, 65.)

Now, the truth is, that the Moravians, on the one hand, just go as fanatically to work as these arraigned missionaries ; and the missionaries, on the other hand, just follow up their Christian instruction with instruction in the arts and decencies of life, and speed forward their converts in civilisation and scholarship as fast as the Moravians do. The only difference between them is, that the one set started earlier than the other. Both had a season of endurance to undergo in the obloquy of men hostile to the truth as it is in Jesus, and animated by strong antipathies against all the peculiarities of our faith. In the case of the Moravians the cloud of misapprehension has more fully broken away. But the day of vindication is approaching for

the others also, who, in their turn, will experience the verity of the saying—that wisdom is justified of all her children.

Though I hold the controversy originated by Gibbon on the subject of secondary causes to be ephemeral, yet there are certain of the books which it called forth still worthy of perusal by the student of divinity. “Watson’s Apology for the New Testament” is one of these; but I feel far more earnest in recommending to you the work of Sir David Dalrymple, Lord Hailes, entitled “An Enquiry into the Secondary Causes of Mr. Gibbon.” It is the work of one extensively read both in Christian antiquities and in the contemporary classical literature of the first ages of the Church; and just as I would have you to read “Warburton’s Juliana,” so would I have you read both the work I now advert to, and also another by the same author, entitled “The Remains of Christian Antiquity,” that you may see how the materials and the informations of remote history are converted into argument, and that, too, in the hands of one who, to extensive reading and laborious research, joined the habit of calm and dispassionate, but withal sound legal judgment, much exercised as that of this eminent jurist was on questions of documentary evidence. They are not voluminous, either of the works which I now recommend; and I do think, irrespective of the importance of the specific question that called forth one, if not both of them, they are calculated to do you most essential service, by introducing you to at least a specimen of that erudition which, after all, furnishes every historical argument connected with Christianity its first and best materials.

BOOK II.—CHAP. II.

PECULIAR DOCTRINES OF CHRISTIANITY.—FAITH.

THE PRAYER.

WE would draw near to Thee, O God, not with the fear of terror, but with the fear of deepest reverence. We bless Thy name that Thou hast provided a place of escape from the terrors of that law which we have violated, even amid the immunities and the privileges of that gospel which Thou freely proposest to the guiltiest of us all. May we enter into its peace, and may we come under its powerful and its purifying influences. Give us to combine the security of the Christian faith with the diligence of the Christian practice, that while we walk before Thee without fear, we may walk before Thee in righteousness and holiness all the days of our lives. Be with us now and ever.—Amen.

“Such is the nature of that influence which the Scriptures represent the Spirit of God as exerting upon every true Christian. The immediate effect of that influence is called in Scripture faith—a word which, according to its etymology, *πιστις*, denotes a firm persuasion of truth, but which, in the Scripture sense of the word, comprehends all the sentiments and affections which naturally arise from a firm persuasion of the truth of Christianity,” &c.—Vol. i. pp. 357, 358.

There is something I suspect metaphysically wrong in this. I would not make these sentiments and affections enter as constituents into the faith. I would rather make them the tests of its reality. I would take the assertion absolutely and without modification or restriction, that by faith we are saved, which may be verified without prejudice to the other saying, that wanting these sentiments and affections we cannot be saved; but that not because these sentiments and affections form ingredients of the faith, and only because they are the necessary and natural fruits of that faith when genuine. And this observation I would not limit to the gratitude and the obedience, but extend it to the trust also. In other words, I do not think that trusting in God or in Christ for your own salvation makes a component part of faith; but I think that

faith really conceived in the overtures of the gospel, rightly understood, would induce that trust. If I witness the semblance of a faith or the profession of it without the sentiments or affections of thankfulness and submission and reliance, instead of pronouncing on it as a wrong kind of faith, I should feel disposed to question its reality. I am not fond of admitting in faith any thing more than the intellectual act of believing, or of viewing it in any other light than as a simple credence of the truths of revelation, in as far as these truths are or may be known to us. It makes nothing against this view that the devils are said to believe and tremble. They may have believed in the reality of the gospel salvation, but they could not believe in it as a salvation addressed to them, or which they were called personally to have any share in. Men believing in the reality of the same salvation, behoved to believe in it as a matter to the benefit of which they were invited, and in all the privileges and immunities of which they had a full warrant to rejoice. So that while the faith of the devil left him trembling as before, the faith, and the faith alone of the man, leads him to trust, and to be thankful, and to obey. Yet I would ascribe these posterior habits and affections to the faith singly. It is true, a man may, under delusion, have a false confidence and a false joy, without the purity or new obedience of the gospel. But I would even say of this, that it is ascribable to a want of truth and integrity in his faith. The faith which he has, or which he thinks himself to have, is not a whole faith in the whole testimony. He may prefer those parts of the Bible which speak to him of pardon, and on these he may like to fasten his attention, to the exclusion of other parts; but the reality of that man's faith even in those parts which he does like must be very questionable, who wilfully shuts his eyes or resists the impression of other parts which he does not like; and still I would suspect not the quality but the existence of the man's faith, in the declaration that God is in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, who proceeds not on the declaration, that unless ye repent ye shall all likewise perish. This whole matter falls more properly to be treated in that department of our course which is comprehended in the text-

book under the title of induction of particular questions in theology; but meanwhile, I would have you to understand that it is a highly important thing for the settlement of some momentous notions, and for clearing away certain puzzling obscurities that are apt to gather around them, to distinguish between the consequent effects of faith and the constituent parts of it.

I would not say that a man had a real faith in any thing which he would not stake his personal safety or interest upon. It is not enough to evince a faith in any proposition whatever, that we do not question it, and that it even falls in with our established habits of conception upon the subject. There is scarcely a reader of history who does not know it to be the unqualified tradition from ancient times, that Great Britain was invaded by Julius Cæsar, and who does not believe, or rather who does not think he believes, in the reality of that invasion. Yet if he could possibly be brought to the test by any such proposal as that of hazarding his whole personal fortune on the truth of it, the truth to be decisively ascertained through some new channel of evidence that had just been opened up, I am not sure but there are many who never till now felt a doubt upon the subject that would not demur to the proposal, in which case I would say of this event, that though it had all along formed one of his historical imaginings, it had never been a sure and absolute and firmly established article of his creed. And I would say the same of a historical faith in Christianity. If a personal interest be not staked upon it, I would doubt not the kind but the actual reality of the faith. And the very circumstance of one's personal Christianity so often not coming in the train of the historical, but coming so often, if not universally, in the train of the experimental faith, is to me one proof more of what I have frequently had occasion to assert in opposition to our text-book, that an acquaintance with the historical evidences of Christianity is not the natural foundation of a persuasion of its truth, but that that persuasion cometh far more surely, and therefore far more efficiently, out of the converse which the mind holds with the internal contents of this revelation, and not with its outward

credentials—that is, cometh far more surely in train of the internal than of the external evidences.

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This mistake*—that is, that faith is the procuring cause of our salvation—is so very deleterious, and has such extensive influence on the mental habitude of Christians, that I shall make it the special subject of my lecture on Thursday. Let me only state at present, that as under the legal economy the great aim was to work up the requisite condition of obedience, so as to obtain the rewards of the law, under the evangelical economy the great aim is to work up the requisite condition of faith, so as to obtain the rewards of obedience. In this respect the two economies seem to be alike, that each requires the making out of a condition; and in as far as the idea of merit is associated with conditions, certain it is, that in opposition to the whole spirit of the New Testament, men may be led to the allegation of a merit for that faith, of which, nevertheless, the Apostle said that it excluded all boasting, that it magnified the Redeemer as all in all, and reduced man's part to that of a simple receiver from the bounty of another, a simple dependent not on his own righteousness, but on the righteousness of another.

There is a great tendency on the part of evangelical writers to look upon good works as merely the signs or the evidences of our salvation. This is giving them greatly too low a place. The sign is an inferior matter to the thing signified; and if by virtue being a sign of our salvation, it be meant that salvation is something different from and higher than the virtue itself, then is the virtue of man looked upon as an inferior consideration to the safety of man, and salvation is degraded into a something agreeable to his selfish or animal nature. It never can be too much insisted on, that man's re-established or regenerated virtue is not a symptom of his salvation, it is the very essence of it. Salvation is but the restoration of man's spiritual health, and this health lies in the harmony of well-poised affections, in the well-conditionedness of a mind where principle is throned in undisputed supremacy over all the inclinations and appetites of nature, in the rightly attuned

* See vol. i. p. 360.

mechanism of a heart where the love of God, both for His excellence and for His kindness, has supreme ascendancy over all the desires of the inner and all the doings of the outer man. This if entered upon and in progress now, is the beginning of heaven, whose kingdom is not, lo here! or, lo there! for that kingdom is within us, and this, after it hath reached perfection and been freed from every grosser alloy in the realms above, is just a moral heaven to which we shall be translated, consisting, as it does, of the love and the likeness of God, under whose new economy, therefore, good works, or the virtues which they indicate, instead of having the mere secondary rank of the tokens of salvation, have in fact the primary rank of being the constituent parts of salvation.

It is often asked what room is there for works in the evangelical system, after they have been superseded as a meritorious condition of salvation by the imputed righteousness of Christ. It is forgotten that higher far than that legal value of virtue by which it purchases from the Lawgiver the right to heaven's rewards, is that moral value of it by which it recommends itself to the moral taste of the Divinity, and peoples heaven with a congenial society. Generally speaking, and as the families of earth are constituted, the right of a child to maintenance in its father's house does not depend on the degree of virtue or of moral accomplishment which belongs to it. Here, then, just as in the evangelical system, which dissociates virtue from any place in the title to heaven, is virtue dissociated from any title to a place in the privileges which naturally attach to every member of the family. Yet who would put the question, Of what value after this is the moral worth of children? Who does not see that precisely on the difference between their moral worth and their moral worthlessness, it turns whether the dwelling-place on earth shall resemble a little heaven, or be an epitome of pandemonium? And the same of the real heaven where God has His especial dwelling. He loves virtue for its own sake, in a far higher degree than He loves it because of the rightful property He has in the service and obedience of His own creatures. The material world can render Him no moral, no rational service; yet because of the

loveliness which He Himself had impressed upon it at the creation, He rejoiced over it as very good. And so of the moral world, apart altogether from the virtue which spreads and multiplies there, being the property and the allegiance which are due to Himself, there is a higher delight on the part of God in the beauties of the mind, in the charms of that moral scenery which is spread around Him in heaven, where nothing that defileth can enter in, the love which His own children bear to Himself and His honour, in the graces of that character over which the principle of duteness has supreme sway, in the worth and the fellowship of all those good affections which compose a moral beauty, and which circulate a moral gladness throughout the upper sanctuary. These are properties which all remain to human virtue, after that, under the evangelical system, virtue has lost the power which it at one time had, of earning a right to the inheritance above, the property in fact of beautifying that inheritance, and of yielding the only happiness which essentially belongs to it, of commencing our heaven here, and of expanding it in a finished and full-grown perfection hereafter.

BOOK II.—CHAP. III.

CHRISTIANITY OF INFINITE IMPORTANCE.

THE PRAYER.

THOU, O God, art the King eternal, immortal, and invisible, the only wise and true God. Do Thou establish within us a perpetual and practical sense of Thyself. Put Thy fear into our hearts that we may not depart from Thee; and may the authority of Thy will be of constant and hourly effect in overruling all the wayward propensities of a frail and an evil nature. Give us to cherish an habitual trust in the merits of the Saviour, so that we may live under an habitual sense of our reconciliation with God; and give us to experience the truth of the saying, that they who receive Thy Son by believing on His name, receive along with Him power to walk as Thy children.

There is a process often adverted to in the New Testament, and which history and the experience of our nature go to con-

firm, the reaction between the understanding and the heart, in virtue of which, when the one is corrupted the other is darkened, when the one is purified and guarded, the other is enlightened and enlarged. One can see a natural connexion and a natural influence in these things. In proportion as the intellect loses its clear sense and knowledge of a God, we are not to wonder that the moral dispositions undergo a depravation ; and, on the other hand, when vicious propensities lord it over us, they, by disinclining us to the thought of God, and so drawing away our attention from Him, do naturally, and, as of course, land us in an oblivion, and at length, an ignorance of the character of the Deity. The world underwent this headlong process of degeneracy from one age to another, and along the footsteps of its history we may mark the reciprocal influence of a darkened understanding upon the affections, and of corrupt affections back again in thickening still more the clouds of misconception and ignorance that beset the understanding. And what is true of the history of the world is true of the history of an individual. It is a law of our nature most important to be adverted to, that on moral and religious subjects the understanding and the will should so reciprocate upon each other ; the depraving effect, on the one hand, of false views respecting the Divinity, the darkening effect, on the other, of those moral perversities by which the heart and character are distempered. We believe the matter can be accounted for philosophically, but it serves most strikingly to mark the accordancy between the processes of grace and those of nature, that in Scripture the very reciprocation between the understanding and the will is spoken of as a judicial infliction on the part of God. Because they wanted gratitude their foolish heart was darkened. On the other hand, because they retained not God in their knowledge, which proceeded from their not liking to retain Him, they were given over to vile affections and to a reprobate mind. The same process is exemplified under the Christian economy ; and it serves most strikingly to mark how essentially this religion of faith is also a religion of virtue. A right belief has a moralizing influence ascribed to it—faith purifying the heart,

working by love, overcoming the world. On the other hand, a right morale, whether in regard to principle or performance, is stated to have a most favourable reflex influence in the confirming and the enlightening of our faith. If any man is willing to do the will of God, he shall know of His doctrine whether it be of God. If any man keep my sayings, to Him will I manifest myself. The Holy Ghost, that great agent both of light to the understanding and of strength to the principles, is given to them who obey Him. By doing that which conscience tells us to be wrong, there is a resistance given to this great agent, and He, grieved, or provoked, or quenched thereby, may withdraw Himself from the mind that He would else have made the subject of His revelations and His influence, and thus—you will find it important that it should be adverted to when called on for advice relating to the experimental Christianity of your hearers—there is, on the one hand, a connexion between obedience and spiritual darkness, and on the other, a reverse connexion between obedience and spiritual discernment. He who hath to him shall be given, from him who hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.

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The consideration here stated* is of powerful effect in preaching—I mean the enhancement of men's guilt by their rejection of the gospel. The more freely, in fact, that you ply them with the overtures of reconciliation, the more forcibly may you expatiate on the awful consequence of their noncompliance with them. The tenderness of the one argument and the terror of the other are in exact proportion; for the more earnest and affectionate the kindness has been which presses the mercy of the New Testament on their acceptance, the more emphatic will be the condemnation of those who have stood their ground against the touching demonstrations of a forbearance which they have trampled on, of a long-suffering and a goodness which they have despised.

To the people whom you address, the gospel should be held forth as an alternative dispensation. They, on the one hand,

* Vol. i. pp. 394, 395.

should be plied with the language of entreaty ; nor can you, from the terms in which this message of peace to the world is couched and conveyed, exceed your commission as its ministers, by urging the proposals of full and unconditional forgiveness on the entertainment of all and the acceptance of all. There is great charm and efficacy in the isolating or individualizing of your hearers, so as instead of casting the matter generally abroad, to press it personally home on every conscience, and, if possible, bringing it closely into application to the hopes and the fears of every bosom. This you are fully warranted to do by the terms in which the message of the gospel is conceived—by words, for example, of such universal, and at the same time of such pointed and specific application, as “whosoever,” and “all,” and “any,” and “every,” being associated with the calls and invitations of the New Testament. You stand on prodigiously high vantage-ground when you beseech them to be reconciled, when you tell them of this most impressive attitude on the part of God, if it were only reflected on—God waiting to be gracious—when you assure them, in the very terms of His own protestation and His oath, that He has no pleasure in the death of the sinner, but rather that he should turn to Him and live, and is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But after having urged and exhibited this argument to the utmost, there still remains in the treasury of Divine truth another, and that, with spirits of a certain mould, a still more overwhelming argument. The one argument, in fact, just serves to whet and to temper or bestow a finer edge upon the other. In very proportion to the tenderness of those slighted calls will be the tremendous severity of that reaction which you shall bring upon yourselves if you turn away from them. If the gospel be not the savour of life unto life, it will be tenfold more the savour of death unto death. There are scripture expressions which indicate an awful reaction of this sort ; and, give notice, that whatever provocation there may be in the violated law, there is far deeper provocation felt in the neglected gospel. There are some such intimations given to us by the phrase of “treasuring up wrath

against the day of wrath," if we despise the long-suffering of God ; and that other phrase, full of emphasis and terror, "the wrath of the Lamb," making us to understand that no anger burns more fiercely than the anger of slighted tenderness, no vengeance is more overwhelming than the vengeance of an outraged and rejected mercy.

BOOK II.—CHAP. VI.

CONTROVERSIES OCCASIONED BY THE SCRIPTURE SYSTEM.

THE PRAYER.

THOU reignest in majesty, O God, over the universe which Thou hast made, with power unlimited, with wisdom unerring, with goodness inexhaustible, and, above all, with a tender mercy which rejoices over all Thy works, and in the midst of all Thine attributes. We bless Thy name for the gospel of Jesus Christ, in which we behold the radiance and the harmony of all the perfections of Thy nature. Give us to behold Thy glory in the face of Thy Son ; and may we experience both the peace and the purifying influence of Thy salvation, which proclaims Thee at once to be a just God and a Saviour.

It was not science, but science falsely so called—it was not philosophy, but vain philosophy, which the apostle denounces in his writings. It was not the philosophy whose great, and it may be said whose only question to her disciples is, What findest thou ? for such a philosophy as this is in strict accordance with the faith whose only question to her disciples is, What readeest thou ? Both the one and the other have the utmost respect for that boundary which separates the known from the unknown, the one never venturing beyond the limits of experience, so as to be wise above that which is written in the volume of accessible nature ; and the other never venturing beyond the limits of revelation, so as to be wise above that which is written in the volume of Scripture. We do not think

that, had the Baconian philosophy been known and proceeded on in the days of Paul, he would have stigmatized it as a vain philosophy; and when we look back to the ages that most abounded with theological controversy, as being also signalized by the most glaring transgression of all her maxims, we cannot but look onwards with high anticipation when we think of the juster and more modest philosophy of our own day, as the token of another era in theological science, when the vain and the useless and the imaginative questions that agitated the Church in other days shall be suffered to sleep in the shades from which they had been conjured, and all the dogmata of our profession shall be the results of an enlightened criticism employed on the sayings of Scripture, and of enlightened system founded on the generalities of Scripture.

And we believe it will be found that what was true of ancient is also true of modern heresy. It proceeds on the fancied competency of reason to entertain questions which lie without her boundaries. It proceeds on a preference for the fancies of speculation over the findings of experience—for any hypothesis by man on a subject beyond the scope of his faculties, I would call a fancy of speculation; whereas any testimony in the Bible of a messenger who had proved his credentials from heaven, I would call a finding of his experience. On this principle, I have long been struck, not with the daring temerity alone but with the illiterateness of Socinianism, fully as much with its want of philosophic consistency and strength as with the want of a firm scriptural basis on which it might stand, so as, in fact, to confer on it the aspect rather of a piece of meagre sentimentalism, than of a formidable system that had aught like profound scholarship or solid argument to sustain it.

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The distinction between the business of preaching and that of students in divinity is very well stated in our text-book.* It is right that you should become acquainted with the controversies of the Church, and know both how to vindicate and how to state the propositions of a sound theology, so as to neutralize

* See vol. i. p. 440.

the reasonings of those who oppose them, and to substitute in the place of their statements such counter-statements as might serve the purpose of a precise and effective testimony against them. But ever remember, that the direct purposes of conviction and comfort and edification are best served in a general audience by the original statements of Scripture, and by your simple and natural attempts to enforce these, without reference at all to the sophistry or even to the existence of the errors which stand opposed to them ; so that the proper work of the pulpit might even be best and most efficiently discharged although from one end of the year to another not one sermon had been in the least tinged with the phraseology or flavour of a polemic theology. It were laying a most onerous servitude on the business of preaching, if incumbent to go out of the plain and rectilineal way, merely because this one heretic or that other may have sprung up in some bygone age of the Church, of whose unscriptural crudities, after all, the great bulk of every congregation are completely unconscious. The office of a steward for dispensing the mysteries of God is wholly distinct from the office of a debater for putting down the mistakes and misconceptions of men. The pulpit is the place for the discharge of the one office, the press, or, if you will, the social party, is the place for the discharge of the other ; and you should be accomplished for both, so as to acquit yourselves of them in the right places or occasions, but without interchanging the places and confounding the one with the other. And here let me admit that the very exercise of discriminating between truth and error may qualify you for a clearer and more distinct statement of the truth, a statement which you can make in the pulpit without disturbing the minds of your auditors at all with any intimation, and far less with any formal refutation, of the error that is opposed to it. I cannot refuse that, just as you may be better prepared for the description of a strictly rectilineal movement by having the deviations and the unevennesses pointed out to your notice, so may you be the better enabled, for a firm and unfaltering pathway of sound doctrine, by the deflections and the byways of unscriptural spe-

culators having been set forth and exposed to you. Whether I regard your access to the public by authorship, or your opportunities of converse with men in society, I would have you, the future office-bearers of our Church, accomplished for the task of laying an arrest upon error—and I can imagine not a few, but many instances, where your studies of the controversial theology may accomplish you better for the direct statements of the pulpit, even though there should never be the formal introduction of aught like controversy there. Only in the order of your studies on the subject-matter of Christianity, I should like the *Theologia Elenctica* to come last, and even then not to be entered on without a constant reference, as I have already advised you, to the *Theologica Didactica*. The whole discussion is now so implicated with controversy that I am not yet aware of a single treatise where you will find these two completely clear of each other; but certainly were I to assign a progress for your readings, I should vastly prefer your commencing with the books where the scriptural predominates, and finishing off with the books where the scholastic errors of the heretics are met and extinguished by scholastic instruments. On this principle, I must confess my partiality for those summaries of doctrine where, under each head or general position, you meet with a cluster of texts in proof or confirmation of it. It may sound oddly, but really, on principles which I hold to be the philosophically sound ones, I should esteem it a good commencement if you pondered every question and answer of our Shorter Catechism, with its accompanying Scriptures under each, in the little manual commonly known by the title of the Proofs; or if you read our Confession, with the Larger and Shorter Catechisms, in those editions where the Scripture proofs are given at large. After these there is a book that I like very much, the Aphorisms of Vitringa, where (though he dips a little into the controversial) the leading positions of theology are given in consecutive order, with a host of Scripture authorities under each of them. And here I would have you not to be betrayed into the impression of the insignificance of the work because of the humble duodecimo form in which it

is presented, nor to think that the enormous folios of the systematic theologian, who gives more of himself and less of Scripture, form a prouder or a greater achievement. I suppose that you read all the texts pointed out though not presented in these little summaries, and then you will be in the direct line of making solid advancement in the pure didactic theology. After him, I would have you to read an abridgment of the *Marekii Medulla*, both because of its arrangement and its scriptural references, though he enters more largely than Vitranga into the controversial, the title of his work indeed being the *Theologia Didactica et Elenctica*. It is difficult after this to institute a precise order for your systematic readings on divinity. I would not object to Burnet on the Thirty-Nine Articles, in spite of certain laxities of sentiment to be found in him. He may be followed by Pearson on the Creed ; then by Calvin's Institutes ; then by Pictetus' larger work on Systematic Theology, who, though large on the controversial, yet keeps the *didactica* and the *elenctica* perfectly distinct from each other. I on purpose would give him a precedency to the elder Turretin, who is controversial all over, his book indeed being entitled *Theologia Elenctica* ; and perhaps never was an author better accomplished for the ponderous task of which he has acquitted himself in so many ponderous volumes. There is no man, perhaps, who possessed more of the legal talent of clearing away the irrelevancies of every question, and putting it upon its own right basis ; and then there is such soundness of judgment, even in matters of purely ethical science as well as in theology, and generally a wise and well-argued deliverance at the last. There are few occasions on which I either question or dissent from him ; while all over on the impulse of an immediate perusal, I have marked in places innumerable the gems of precious and weighty thought. You will observe I put him last in my catalogue, for with him at present I finish my recommendations, being not yet qualified to say aught of Stapferus, whose book, however, from its title, should be read at the close rather than the commencement of your series of systematic authors ; the work I allude to is *Stapferi Insti-*

tutiones Theologicae Polemicæ. The amount of systematic reading which I have now recommended is enough, and more perhaps than enough, on an average, for students of divinity. Some of you, I trust, on a principle which I have often adverted to, will overshoot my advice, making this their favourite walk, and so qualifying themselves for sustaining in their own persons the honours of the Church militant. But I have no ambition and no wish to send out a whole army of gladiators; and though I should not be sorry even if all, during the course of their preparation for the ministry, found time to read all that I have now specified, I must not forget the still higher demands which the hortatory theology has upon your attention than the controversial, and that the main object of your studies should be to qualify you for the business of exposition and address in pulpits, and for the care of parishes.

BOOK III.—CHAP. I.

OPINIONS CONCERNING THE PERSON OF THE SON.

THE PRAYER.

WE bless Thy name, O God, that when we had undone ourselves by disobedience, Thou laidst help upon one who is willing and mighty to save. We rejoice that Thou sentest Thy Son to the world, and hast declared Him to be the brightness of Thine own glory, and the express image of Thine own person. Thou hast set Him forth as a propitiation—may we look at Him as such, and have peace. Thou hast set Him forth as an example—may we look at Him as such, and walk in His steps.

“It is the language of Dr. Priestley, that the value of the gospel does not, in any degree, depend upon the idea which we may entertain concerning the person of Christ, because all that is truly interesting to us, is the object of His mission, and the authority with which His doctrine is promulgated.”—Vol. ii. p. 2.

There are two distinct principles on which a wrong belief might endanger the interests of your eternity. The first is, that, as an unbelief in the face of clear scriptural testimony, it may imply a criminal disregard of the authority of Scripture, and so in itself may be the object of a direct judgment and condemnation. This principle may be conceived to be exemplified even with matters of doctrine and information which are comparatively trifling; such as, that Marcus was sister's son to Barnabas. Faith in such a statement may be of little importance on its own account; but still the want of it may indicate another want of fearful magnitude and effect—it may indicate the want of a full and settled faith in Scripture. But there is another and a distinct principle on which a wrong belief might put to hazard, nay put to certainty of overthrow and ruin, the wellbeing of our eternity. It may relate to a doctrine whose belief is indispensable to that state of mind and character without which there can be no meetness for heaven. The truth of Marcus being sister's son to Barnabas is in no way the medium of our moral or spiritual preparation for paradise; but many a doctrine can be specified having this property of a medium, and perhaps an essential medium, so that wanting it, you miss the road that leads to a blissful immortality, the mental discipline that qualifies you for its enjoyment or for entrance thereupon. And furthermore, as it may be expected that in proportion to the importance of the doctrine will be the frequency and the fulness of the disclosures which revelation makes of it, we may expect that, in reference to it, a wrong belief may endanger the man's eternal state in both the ways which I have now specified, as being both a criminal defiance to clear scriptural testimony, and implying a state of opinion fatally deficient and wrong, because connected with a fatally deficient and wrong state of the sentiments and affections. The distinction which I have now made will enable us to discriminate between the truths which are and those which are not fundamental in Christianity. They are those which are characterized by the second principle. A truth may be clearly revealed and yet not be a fundamental one. To be fundamen-

tal, it must essentially enter into the formation of those sentiments and that character which qualify for heaven.

Now, on both grounds we would meet the assertion of Priestley in reference to the divinity of our Saviour. In the first place, it is not unimportant whether we shall think one way or other of a matter, provided that Scripture has given clear and manifest deliverance thereupon, which we hold it to have done in reference to this particular doctrine. It is not unimportant whether we shall set up our own wisdom in opposition to the doctrines of revelation, and may in fact be the evidence of as rebellious a spirit as setting up our own will in opposition to the precepts of revelation. And then, as to the other principle—the importance of the doctrine in itself as a medium through which we arrive at a right state of sentiment and affection, let me only remark at present, that if the Saviour be clearly revealed as a Divine person, in what state are we, as to wrong and criminally wrong principle, if we do not render to Him Divine honours? Suppose that there is evidence enough to substantiate His Divinity did we only but attend to it, and then what excuse can we have for withholding from Him who is represented to us as God manifest in the flesh, as God blessed for ever, the homage due to His name? If you will but recollect, you will find that there were in this the very essence of direct impiety. Grant that the works of nature give every indication of the God of nature, and if you, in defiance of these indications, withhold from God the incumbent reverence and the incumbent gratitude, this were the very essence of irreligion. Now, I beg you to consider where lies the moral difference, if indeed there be any at all, between the indication afforded of the Divinity in the world, and the indication afforded of the Divinity in the word. If there be clear passages there attaching the characteristics and the honours of Divinity to the person of Jesus Christ, then to regard Him not as God and to worship Him not as God, is just tantamount to a refusal on our part of the allegiance due to a Being whose Divinity has been manifested and made known to us; or, in other words, is as much an act of defiance to God as if rendered

on any other occasion when we had met the traces of Him in any other quarter of contemplation.

BOOK III.—CHAP. II.

SIMPLEST OPINION CONCERNING THE PERSON OF CHRIST.

THE PRAYER.

WE draw near, O God, in a spirit of humble dependence upon Thee. Give us to recognise Thy sovereignty in the history of the world, and to perceive how subservient all the administrations of Thy providence are to the fulfilments of Thy word. Thou art a God of judgment; and in the destruction of the rebellious of other days may we behold a manifest token of that still more awful destruction which awaits the ungodly at the consummation of all things. May we think of that coming day, of its solemnities and its terrors, and so be made to feel what manner of men we ought to be, in all fear and holy conversation.

“Having stated the three opinions concerning the person of Christ, to which all others may be reduced, I proceed to compare the grounds upon which they rest. And here I must begin with observing, that general reasonings concerning the probability of any of these opinions, or its apparent suitability to the end of Christ’s manifestation, ought not to enter into this comparison.”—Vol. ii. p. 17.

I would say of all general reasonings upon this subject what I have repeatedly said of conjecture and theory on any subject, whether of theology or general science, that it is placed beyond and above the limits of human observation. They are equally unsound and unphilosophical in both. To set aside Scripture on this high and to us inaccessible topic, is just as glaring a transgression of all just principle as to set aside experience on any question of general interest or speculation. To be the disciples of Bacon in things of science, is, if consistently upheld in

the passage of the mind from the one department of investigation to the other, to be the disciples of the Bible in things of sacredness—it being the uniform demand of sound philosophy, What findest thou? and the uniform demand of sound faith, What readest thou?

On the particular topic before us, related as it is to the constitution of the Deity, and to the competency of a superior nature entering into union with an inferior, so as to compound and to form one person, I would say that never could we be presented with a matter for our opinions or our thoughts so utterly beyond the precincts of our attainable knowledge by any exercise of any faculty of our own. It is a thing of which, aside from that which enters into the narrative of Scripture, the collective experience of the whole species from their first origin can give us no information whatever. The Deity is altogether shrouded from our observation, wrapt as it were in profound invisibility from our eyes; nor can we penetrate the veil which mantles Him from the perception and the ken of the human senses. Any subject which relates to His physical constitution belongs to a sphere transcendently above us, and it may be said to lie at the remoteness of infinity from any possibility of our discernment. He who was with the Father from the beginning, and has told us something of the mysteries that be in the place He came from—He who, after having sojourned here, ascended to that place, and sent down the Paraclete, or a monitor to tell in larger revelation of a region wholly unexplored by us—one word of definite information from Him is worth a thousand of our own darkling speculations; nor can I imagine a more tremendous presumption, or even an infliction of greater violence against all the rules of just philosophy, to say no more, than for us to allow any imagination of ours to set aside the statements of heaven's own inspired messengers.

BOOK III.—CHAP. III.

PRE-EXISTENCE OF JESUS.

THE PRAYER.

MAY Thy word, O God, dwell in us richly in all wisdom. Give us both to experience its power and to taste of its preciousness. May the disclosures there given of Jesus Christ teach us to honour the Son even as we honour the Father. There are secret things which belong to Thyself, and there are revealed things which belong to us and our children. We rejoice that among these we find, as if written with a sunbeam, that Christ is God. We would render to Him the homage that is due to His nature and to His name; and we confide in His everlasting strength both to sanctify and save. Be with us now and ever, for His sake.—Amen.

John the Baptist bore this testimony to Christ's pre-existence:—"After me cometh a man which is preferred before me, for he was before me, *πρωτος μου ην*."—John i. 15, 30. Lardner interprets these words as meaning—"He was continually the object of my reverence." "I knew of Him before that He came out to public notice, and admired Him in anticipation, so as to regard Him even then as superior to myself." He was before me, as thus read, is tantamount to John's saying, that He was continually before myself in my own estimation—a specimen of the gratuitous and far-fetched way in which a remote and most unlikely meaning is attached to Scripture for the purpose of making escape from the obvious and natural meaning when that happens to be opposed to a favourite doctrine. But the interpretation is not so remarkable on this account, as that it should have been proposed and maintained by Lardner, a proud and pre-eminent name in theology, yet, I would have you to observe, in a special department of that science altogether distinct from the present one which we have now entered. An able expounder of the outward credentials of Christianity may not necessarily be an able expounder of its inward contents. It is one business to be a collector of testimonies, and another

business to be a translator of texts. An authority earned on any given field of discovery and investigation should not be extended to another field wholly distinct from it; and it were just as irrational to defer to Lardner's opinion on the subject-matter of our faith, because he has been a successful and laborious compiler of its proofs, as it would be to make Sir Isaac Newton absolute on a question of anatomy, because he had laid open the mechanism of the planetary system. There is a strong delusion upon this subject among men who will not think for themselves and take their own independent view of every argument which is submitted to them; and it is because of my confidence in your superiority to this delusion that I fearlessly recommend Lardner on the evidences, though I think him wrong on the doctrines of our religion, and Michaelis on the bibliography of Scripture, though I think him egregiously wrong on the question of its inspiration. We should feel it somewhat a ticklish and hazardous matter thus to bring before your eyes the unsound deliverances of men whom, on their own peculiar subjects, you have been accustomed to behold with reverence; but really I feel as if there were a strength and a staple in the truth, by which it is enabled to stand its ground against every adverse influence of this sort, and more especially on the subject of the Trinity. I really do think, that the best way of disarming Lardner's four sermons on this subject of all their mischief, would just be to read them. It were greatly more dangerous if you only heard that he was the author of an argument which you had not studied than if you had studied the argument. His known authority, associated with his unknown argument, would bring a more unfavourable influence upon the question than if both were known; so that the most direct mode in this instance of dissipating the authority would be to obtain a sight of the production, and by personal inspection become satisfied of its weakness.

I am sorry to allege of Lardner, that there seems something disingenuous in these sermons. In the first one, where he considers the Trinitarian scheme, he does not let himself out to an express or formal denial of it, quoting the words of our ortho-

dox formularies, and then saying, "These expressions might be allowed to represent an obscure doctrine. Some have said that it is contradictory. All I affirm is, that it is obscure and difficult to be conceived and understood, if it be not absolutely incomprehensible." And yet when he comes in his second sermon to consider the Arian scheme, he is quite bold and distinct in his avowals, resting them, however, on such arguments as would make infinitely more against the Trinitarian, of which he had just spoken with such an appearance of reserve and delicacy—not therefore inflicting a direct and ostensible blow on the doctrine of the Trinity, but reserving his deadliest thrusts against it, through the side of another doctrine and another system.

"John viii. 58,—‘Before Abram was, I am.’ The old Socinian interpretation was:—‘I exist before that patriarch has become, according to the import of the name Abraham, the father of many nations; for that name is to receive its fulfilment by the preaching of my religion, in which all the nations of the earth are to be blessed through the seed of Abraham.’ But this is saying nothing; for the Jews, to whom our Lord is speaking, existed also before this event: I am, and ye all are, before the patriarch becomes Abraham in this sense. The modern Socinian interpretation is not more plausible. ‘Before Abraham was born, I am he;’ *i.e.*, the Christ in the destination and appointment of God. My commission as Messiah was fixed and determined by the Almighty before Abraham had a being. But this is saying nothing peculiar to the Messiah; for known to God are all His works.”—Vol. ii. pp. 33, 34.

I bid you remark here, that it is impossible to hear these and other Socinian explanations without an immediate and strong impression of their absurdity. They strike you at once as far-fetched, and as laying a strain and a distortion upon a passage whose natural meaning is altogether opposed to the one they labour to fix upon it. Now I think you must be sensible that this first impression is more forcible and vivid than that which a critical argument leaves behind it. For argument, you will observe, though it makes obvious that which is obscure, also

makes obscure that which is obvious. The thing, in fact, may be too plain for reasoning, or at least the reasonings, instead of making it plainer to conviction, may only have the effect of overlaying by needless explanation that which is far more distinctly seen in the light of an immediate manifestation. Now this instant discernment of the obviously true meaning, and as instant discernment of the absurdity of its opposite, is the perception of common sense, and not the result of critical learning, and the understanding of an ordinary man is just as competent to it as the understanding of a scholar. In other words, with the general confidence I have in the accuracy of our translation, I would defer nearly as much to the impression of a plain reader whether among our peasants or our citizens, as to what the Bible says and means respecting the person of Christ, as I would to the conclusions of an erudite criticism. It is just like the confidence I would have in the understandings of plain and unsophisticated jurymen in regard to the depositions which they are listening to. There might be no danger of their mistaking the sense of these depositions, although it should be a very possible thing for very strange and perverse interpretations to be put upon them by the ingenuity of a hostile pleader, and such interpretations as might require an equal counter ingenuity on the part of the friendly pleader to disarm and neutralize. Meanwhile, the common sense that is in the jury-box arbitrates the question at the last, and far sounder and solidier will the judgment be that it is left to such arbitration. Now, among the manifold depositions of Scripture, granting it to be accurately translated on the whole, we have the full weight and authority of such an arbitration by a multitude of plain readers—an arbitration that would have been sound and solid had controversies never been stirred, and just as sound and solid after these controversies as before them. And the inference which I educe from this is, that among the people of a congregation, with the Bible in their hands, and the habit of perusing it, there is a solid and a warrantable conviction of Christ's Divinity, which all the argumentations of your text-book will not make more solid and satisfactory than it already is. It is

right that you should know and that you should master every one of these argumentations, and be able at all times to combat the threatened inroads of heresy. But be assured that you may proceed *instantly*, or with a very short introductory statement and proof indeed, on the Divinity of Christ, and fill up the great body of your sermons with the richness of its moral and practical applications.

BOOK III.—CHAP. IV.

ACTIONS ASCRIBED TO JESUS IN HIS PRE-EXISTENT STATE.— CREATION.

THE PRAYER.

GIVE us, O Lord, to see in the greatness of the Saviour the greatness of that salvation which He hath achieved for us. Convince us of the danger we incur by neglecting it, and of the awful doom which awaits us, should we have been found to turn a deaf or a heedless ear to those overtures of reconciliation wherewith He came charged to our world. Forbid that we should add to the provocation of a broken law the tenfold provocation of a rejected gospel, and convince us in time, O God, that no anger burns more fiercely than the anger of slighted tenderness, no indignation more overwhelming than the indignation of offered and despised mercy. O be with us now and ever, for His sake.—Amen.

“The three fullest and most explicit ascriptions of the work of creation to the Son, are to be found in the beginning of the Gospel of John, in the first chapter of the Epistle to the Colossians, and in the first chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews. All the three appear to teach, explicitly and particularly, that Jesus is the creator of the world. Yet they have received different interpretations, of which you ought not to be ignorant,” &c.—Vol. ii. p. 43.

You will now begin to perceive the desirableness of a profound Scripture criticism among the ministers of the Church.

Along with the facility of translating aright all those passages which contain important truth, and the more important, generally speaking, the greater this facility; but along with such facility, it should be remembered, there might be the utmost difficulty in defending the translations that have been made. Nor will you be at a loss to explain the consistency of these two things. You have the light of many kindred passages in Scripture to guide you in making a translation, but in defending it you have to meet and put down all the allegations of your adversaries, who might thus lead you, by their argument, the whole round of Greek and Hebrew and Rabbinical literature. Should any of them, for example, quote, in opposition to the common rendering, an opposite usage of the word or phrase in question among classic authors, then however warrantable to make the translation on Scriptural usage, it were further to be wished that the translation, when possible, could be defended on the ground of classical usage also. This has often been most triumphantly done in critical controversies by the defenders of orthodoxy. A solitary instance has been completely explained away, either proved in fact to be not an apposite instance at all, or proved itself to be an anomalous deviation from the established habit of classical authors. You will thus perceive how it requires a far more accomplished criticism to defend our translation than to have executed it; and that while, by means of a mere common light, you can insure to the multitude a supply of religious truth through the medium of our popular versions, it is by a higher light and a higher learning that you detect the darkening influences of sophistry and error.

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“It is this system (that of the Gnostics) which Paul so often attacks under the name of false philosophy, strifes of words, endless genealogies, science falsely so called.”—Vol. ii. p. 50.

I have already stated, that there appears to me to be nothing in the charges which Paul makes against science and philosophy, that makes against the true science and the sound philosophy of modern times. Let knowledge but rest upon evi-

dence, and from whatever quarter of nature or history it may be gathered, it is impossible that it can have any hostile influence on Christianity. A truth in one department cannot be at war with a truth in another—a truth, for example, as discovered by Newton or demonstrated by Euclid, with the truth as it is in Jesus. There is no more incompatibility between a doctrine which justly represents some state of things on earth, and the doctrine which justly represents the state of things in heaven, than there is between the last discovery in chemistry and the last in astronomical science. It is true of many an individual, that he may have a passion for science which absorbs his whole heart, to the exclusion of the things of sacredness; and any monopolizing affection of this sort, if it but keep out the faith of the gospel from the mind and the influences of that faith upon the character, is of deadly and pernicious effect on the eternal interests of him who is so actuated. But this is a different sort of mischief from that which the Apostle alluded to when he adverted to the philosophy of his own times, which in doctrine and speculation stood directly opposed to the revelations of heaven, and in this respect is wholly dissimilar to the reigning philosophy of the day, whose cautious and inductive spirit, in virtue of which it would subordinate every imagination of its own to the results of an observation of nature, is in striking accordancy with that spirit which would cast down all lofty imaginations, in deference to the results not of natural but of Scriptural observation, and so bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.

I may here take occasion to repeat what I have before hinted at, that once we know a philosophy to be fundamentally and altogether in principle wrong, it really seems a very unnecessary task to examine closely and in detail all the absurdities which it may have chanced to emanate. Now that we know natural observation to be the high road to science and philosophy, and Scriptural criticism to be the high road to soundness in theology, are we to complicate these studies by the most unnecessary erudition, the object of which is to make one's self acquainted with all the fooleries of all the ancients? I predict that

much of the learning connected with our profession must, from the mere accumulation of a far better though more modern literature on the subject, fall into desuetude. I on this principle do not advise you to attempt being very profound about the Gnostics and their *Æons*, though as much of their peculiarities as explains John is highly important, and for this, and also for the sake of illustrating the history of opinions in the Church, you may read both Hill and Mosheim on the subject. But even the history of opinions in the Church will come at length to have a place far more secondary and subordinate than it has at present, or than it certainly had a century ago, and that as a study which will not be wholly but in great part superseded by the far more pertinent and productive inquiry, what are the actual averments of God's own actual revelation, and how shall we best elicit these by the ever brightening lights of Scripture criticism? What gives me less value than I otherwise would have had for Bishop Bull's work on the Trinity, is, that it is more an investigation into the opinions of the Fathers respecting the Trinity, than an independent investigation of his own. Were I to advise any time for the study, that is the work which I would have you to read, however, and more especially as there is an English translation of it, enabling you therefore to accomplish the perusal in less time. It were well that you became acquainted with the specimens which he presents of the style of speculation that prevailed in those days. You will satisfactorily see how the language of the didactic was at length foregone in the formularies of the Church for that of a polemic theology. I should like if many of you were to peruse Bishop Bull's work on the Trinity, and if all of you were to read the powerful volume of Horsley against Priestley, both of these works, let it be understood, being more to be consulted for the history or erudition of the question, than for the direct merits of it.

PART III.—CHAP. IV.—SECT. II.

COLOSSIANS I. 15-18.

THE PRAYER.

GIVE us, O Lord, diligently to seek after, and supremely to prize, those truths which relate to the way of the sinner's salvation. May we remember the words of the Apostle, who was determined to know nothing save Jesus Christ and Him crucified, and who esteemed all things but loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Jesus Christ our Lord. Thou hast said that the knowledge of Thyself and of Him whom Thou hast sent is life everlasting; and in the awful description which Thou hast given of the day of reckoning, Thou hast told us of the vengeance that shall be inflicted on those who know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. May we, under the impression of these sayings, betake ourselves in good earnest to the study of our Bibles, and through the faith that is in Christ Jesus, become wise to salvation. Be with us now and ever.—Amen.

“The apostle, in reminding the Christians at Colosse amid the sufferings to which their faith might expose them, of the ground of thankfulness which it afforded, is led into one of those digressions which are common in his writings. He had been speaking of that redemption through the blood of Christ which is the fundamental doctrine of the Christian religion. The redemption suggests to him the dignity and character of the ransom. He expatiates upon these topics for a few verses, (chap. i. 15-18,) and then returns to the point from which he had set out. The digression, although it appears to interrupt the course of the argument, promotes most effectually the design of the Epistle,” &c.—Vol. ii. pp. 61, 62.

We have already said that though no uses of a doctrine could be stated, yet that the very circumstance of its being affirmed in the Bible, laid on Christians the obligation of believing it. If offensive to the taste and preconceptions of an inquirer, and if, because of this, the truth and authority of God are to be set aside, this of itself, whatever the importance or unimportance of the doctrine may be, may infer a deadly re-

sistance to the faith, which of itself is a deadly error. It may be a decisive symptom of infidelity, and this, too, aggravated by circumstances which belong not to common infidelity. The latter is a crime, because, in the face of likelihoods, the attention was turned away from the evidence that might else have overpowered it. But the other, after a formal assent to the Bible as a message from God, forgets the docility and the reverence that were due, and with utmost moral unfairness attempts to pervert its meaning, and to tamper with its express and authoritative sayings. The discerner of the secrets of the inner man has His eye on the whole mental process of the controversialist, and can mark the character of his thoughts and affections, detect the latent dishonesty, and observe when it is that pride and passion, and the antipathies of offended taste, seduce him unworthily from the obedience of the faith. A moral responsibility for one's belief is not confined to the general question of whom the Bible comes from—so as to reach condemnation to infidels alone. It extends to the question of what the Bible says, and so as to reach at least as decisive condemnation to heretics also. They may suffer not merely because—wanting the truth they have rejected—they want the essential medium for such sentiments and affections as might qualify them for heaven; but irrespective of this, they may suffer for the rejection itself, because implying a heedlessness of what themselves admit to be the testimony of God, and an act of violence done to His plain declarations.

So much for the first principle on which a heresy might be damnable, and we hold that there is no topic, the denial of which involves a greater weight of this condemnation than the one which now engages us. A repetition of acts, it is said, gives rise to a habit, and so many are the acts of violence that must be done to the manifold depositions of Scripture for the divinity of Christ, that we fear the doctrine can only be disowned by those who, hardened in the practice, are in readiness whenever God's sayings and their own favourite sentiments come into collision, for inflicting upon Scripture a perpetual violence. We can scarcely imagine a state of mind more fearfully hazardous than this to the eternal interests of him who

thus manifests it, or one that bespeaks a harder defiance to the authority of heaven's Governor.

But beside this one principle on which a heresy might be damnable, you understand that there is another. You are aware that the terminating object of Christianity is not the belief of its doctrines, and that this belief is but the stepping-stone to an ulterior achievement. It proposes, through the creed, to reach the character of man, and, accordingly, while it says that Scripture is profitable for doctrine, it adds that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished to all good works. Now this doctrine may be so far transformed or mutilated by heresy, as to be bereft of this efficacy. There are articles of information in Scripture which need never be present to the mind, for the sake of a salutary moral influence over it from the commencement to the close of the Christian life. We hold it in no instance safe that you deny any such article, but they often with perfect safety are forgotten, as the number of the tribes, the dimensions of the temple, the hour of the day at which our Saviour was crucified, the names of some of the Apostles, the dress of John the Baptist, and a thousand other particulars it were needless to specify. But there are other articles of information which it is neither safe to deny nor to forget, and whereof it may be said that the very circumstance of their being out of your mind, puts to hazard your qualifications for a blissful eternity. We have already said that we cannot imagine a more daring moral offence, or one that should infer a heavier condemnation, than the refusal to God of the honour which belongs to Him. It is in fact the very essence or elemental principle of irreligion. But if told that Christ is God, and you refuse to honour him as such, you just incur this very delinquency. A person has been revealed to you having the perfections and the greatness and all the exaltation of Deity, and you render him not the homage that belongs to Deity. It makes no difference how the revelation of His divinity came, if it be a sufficiently evidenced revelation. It matters not whether your attention and belief have been drawn to a God through the medium of the indications in nature, or through the medium of the indications in Scripture, provided

they are true indications, and you by a right and incumbent attention might recognise the truth of them. Nature proclaims the unseen Deity, and you render Him the silent reverence of your adoration and gratitude. Scripture proclaims Jesus Christ to be the Deity,—nay, that He formed and upholds that very nature whose indications had before satisfied you that it must have a God for its author,—and if, after this, you withhold from Christ the same adoration and the same gratitude, yours is the guilt of as manifest an impiety as characterizes him who, though not an Atheist, bears in the whole habit of his affections and thoughts the levity, the heedlessness, and the hardy defiance of Atheism. Knowing of the existence of a neighbour, you are wanting in right and proper morale if you feel not humanely towards him. Knowing, or at least having it in your power to know, that Christ is God, you incur a still more flagrant defect from a right and proper morale, if you do not think divinely of Him and feel accordingly. The guilt is enhanced, if the being whom you treat thus unworthily has laid you under obligations of gratitude. If a man of superior rank, by an act of munificence, rescued your family from despair, and raised you to affluence and honour, we cannot imagine a more direct ingratitude than the affront of treating him beneath the level of his natural dignity. And nothing more flagrantly ungrateful, be assured, nothing in conceivable worse keeping with all that is becoming the relation in which you stand to the Saviour, not a more serious mutilation can be imagined on the right moral system of those affections and regards which belong to a redeemed creature, than that, raised to the hopes and the happiness of eternity, and raised, too, by Him who, though rich for your sake became poor, you should in return withhold from Him the homage due to His character and station. We read in Scripture of the enormity of those who deified the creature as if he were the Creator. Equal is the enormity wherewith they are chargeable who degrade the Creator to the level of the creature. And he who is capable of inflicting this degradation on the Saviour, and that in the face of His asserted Godhead, is not capable, be assured, of joining in that song of eternity where honour and glory and blessing

are ascribed to Him who hath redeemed us and washed us from our sins in His blood.

On the subject of the practical uses of the doctrine now under consideration, I would certainly be cautious of so stating them as to imply, that had it not been for this doctrine, I could have no faith, no security, in other doctrines to be found in the Bible. I am not fond of the assertion that certain doctrines stand or fall together. If both be affirmed in Scripture, and if Scripture make not the express assertion, that they stand or fall together, I would therefore not say, that, apart from and anterior to the information which Scripture itself gives of the connexion between the doctrine of Christ's divinity and the efficacy of His atonement, if I did not believe in the one I would not believe in the other. But after having conceded this, I must state, on the other hand, that there is much in Scripture from which we might infer a connexion between them, and that in virtue of both being believed together, there is an indefinitely greater enhancement given to all the moral influences of the doctrine of the atonement. That there is a real connexion between the two doctrines is very strongly implied in the very expression, that we are bought with a price—that we are ransomed from our state of condemnation—that we are redeemed or bought again from the obligation under which we lay, of sustaining the penalties of a violated law. Now, more than the adequate price would not have been exacted. The justice of God would require no more than an equivalent for the outrage done to the authority of His government, to the high sovereignty and state of His offended attributes. The value of what was rendered would not exceed the value of what was owing on the part of them who were ransomed by it. If the blood of Christ be indeed that by which the Church was purchased, and if Christ was divine, both of which doctrines are expressly affirmed in revelation, then, on the principle that nothing more would be given in compensation for the dignity of a violated law than was enough to repair it, the inference seems plain, that nothing less than an act of expiation by Him on whose person sat the dignity of the Godhead, could effect the reunion of sinners with their God. And we now see how

the law was magnified and made honourable, by a divine personage having had to bear the burden of the world's atonement—by Christ the Son of God, and equal with God, having bowed down His head to the sacrifice.

When the mind of a believer is occupied with both doctrines, you will perceive, I trust, how the one enhances, and that to an indefinite amount, all the moral and practical influences of the other. We cannot imagine how a more emphatic demonstration could be given of the evil of sin, of the dread and insurmountable barrier of separation which it raises between the God of sacredness and the guilty creatures who have offended Him, insurmountable we mean by any created force in the universe, since it needed the interposition of one travelling in the greatness of His strength, and that, too, the strength of the Divinity, to move it away. If the work of our redemption be the direct and personal achievement of Jesus Christ, it makes all the difference of infinity in our estimation of the magnitude of the achievement, whether we believe that Christ was the creature or that Christ was Himself the omnipotent Creator. It marks the force, the infinite force, of that moral impossibility, if I may so term it, which lay in the way of the sinner's acceptance, when thus given to understand that nothing short of the vicarious sufferings of a God could suffice for the reduction of it; and the movement thus made in heaven, the depth that was in it of the divine mystery, which angels are represented as desiring to look into, the terms in which the Captain of our salvation and His enterprise are described in the ancient prophecies, all bespeak that a work had to be done, and a mighty problem in jurisprudence to be resolved, which nought but an unsearchable wisdom could find out, and nought but the strength of omnipotence could execute. And thus the divinity of Christ enhances every moral lesson which can be gathered from the doctrine of the atonement. It enhances our sense of the exceeding turpitude of sin. It throws a deeper sacredness over the character of the Godhead. It props the sinking faith of the despondent sinner, when trembling at the thought of God's dishonoured attributes and of His outraged law, he thinks that, in the homage rendered by the illustrious sufferer

who poured out His soul to the death for us, the character and the law of God have received their noblest vindication. It exalts to the utmost the mercy of the Godhead, for it is mercy in its highest possible exhibition, when it thus had to force a way for itself through difficulties only to be conquered by the arm of one who is represented as mighty—and that the might of infinity—to save. The effect of His intercession—His power as a sanctifier—His right of mastery over all our services—the solemn authority of His lessons and laws—the resistless force of such appeals as, “If ye love me keep my commandments”—the incumbent gratitude and incumbent obedience—all, all obtain a force and an intensity they never could have had, but from the doctrine that Christ is God.

These considerations will need to be further expounded. There is one more which at present I can only advert to without expatiating upon it. Only think of Him as God manifest in the flesh, and what an interest it gives to the study of His thus manifested character, to the history of His visible doings. In the gospel narratives of His life we are thus presented with a picture of the Godhead. The virtues of the eternal and unseen Spirit are made to radiate in visible expression from the human countenance, and to descend upon us in audible accents from the human voice. Through the medium of the senses we come to know of the else mysterious because invisible God. That dark and untravelled interval, which separates the objects of faith from all that is material, has had a high-way of communication thrown over it. By this descent of the incarnate Deity upon our world, the graces and the glories of the Divine character are held forth in ocular representation; and when we think it was the very God in human form who went about during His mysterious sojourn on earth doing good continually—that it was He who wept over the tomb of Lazarus, and mourned when He looked at Jerusalem in the view of its approaching desolation, the dread and the distance we associate with the Godhead are done away, when thus made so impressively to see that the greatest of all beings is also the kindest and the gentlest and the best.

BOOK III.—CHAP. IV.—SECT. IV.

AMOUNT OF THE PROPOSITION, THAT JESUS CHRIST IS THE
CREATOR OF THE WORLD.

THE PRAYER.

WE bless Thy name, O Lord, that Thou hast come forth upon the world from the darkness and the mystery which surround Thy throne. Thou hast made a visible representation of Thyself in Thy Son, whom we recognise as God manifest in the flesh, the brightness of the Father's glory, the express image of His person. Give us continually to look at Him as our propitiation, but give us also to look at Him continually as our example. By the imitation of Jesus Christ may we become like to God. By the transference of His virtues into our own characters, may we become meet for the joys and the companionships of eternity. Be with us now and ever.—Amen.

Many theologians have affirmed of the power to create, that it is the incommunicable attribute of the Deity. There is, I have already observed, an assumption upon this subject which I agree with the author of our text-book in thinking that we are not entitled to make. We know not beforehand whether the power of creating be an incommunicable attribute of the Godhead or not. Should Scripture expressly say so, we could have no doubt upon it. But, anterior to Scripture, it is *ultra vires* on our part to make any affirmation upon the subject. I certainly have no recollection at present of aught that is very express or decisive in Scripture upon the subject; yet still we may gather something, both from its intimations on this particular question, and on another of still greater practical importance, which I shall advert to presently, on the competency of a creature to a certain other achievement, which many have contended can only be effected by one that has the strength and character of the Godhead.

Instead of arriving at the two distinct articles of belief, that Christ is the Creator of the world, and that Christ is God, the first by an information from Scripture, and the second by a

principle of my own, I confess I would be far better satisfied to have distinct informations from Scripture on both of these articles. I should have far greater value for its sayings than for my own reasonings; and therefore, instead of making them out on the strength of one information and one principle, I should feel that my faith had something far more solid to rest upon if but furnished from the Bible with two informations. Now this we actually have, one set of passages deponing to the creation by Christ Jesus, another set of passages deponing to the Divinity of Christ Jesus; and really, to fetch any additional argument for the Divinity from an *a priori* imagination of our own as to the incommunicable nature of the creative faculty, is to go astray in quest of weak arguments when stronger are at hand, is to place the deductions of human reasoning on the same, if not on a higher level, than the declarations of God. Should the Bible itself affirm that the creation is the exclusive prerogative of God, that is a different matter; and without going off the ground of Scripture at all, we might, from the fact of Christ having actually created, arrive at the solid inference that Christ is indeed God.

Thus may we be enabled to arrive, and through a medium exclusively scriptural, at the inference of His divinity from His creative power; and even from the mere separate assertions of these two things in the Bible, whether a connexion between them be there affirmed or not, we may gather some likelihoods, if not proofs, of that very principle which, at the outset, we have no title to assume. We know by a set of independent statements in the Bible that Christ has created, and we know by a set of statements alike independent, that Christ is God. A something may be gathered out of these two things, each of which we know to be separately true in regard to the connexion between them. It is often asserted to be the characteristic of a wise system of administration, when any effect is intended, not to incur a waste of means or of energy by the employment of a higher instrumentality than is needed for the production of it. By one kind of ministry, even the ministry of material agents, we are furnished with many physical

accommodations—by another, the ministry of our fellow-men, we are admitted to many of the exercises and enjoyments of affection and moral principle—by a third, the ministry of angels, we are helped in some unknown and unexplained way on the road to salvation ; and if by the ministry of none of these we read of the work of creation having ever been effected, if, instead of this, we are informed, by one set of passages, that Christ is God, and by another, that He is the Creator of all things, we have some ground for the inference, that it is for God alone to bring out of nothing—some presumption for a deliverance on the abstract question, whether the creative power be an incommunicable attribute of the Deity.

But we hold the reasoning on the power to atone still more decisive than the reasoning on the power to create. If a less costly sacrifice would have sufficed for the restoration of sinners, a more costly would not have been exacted. The law is represented as obtaining satisfaction for its injured rights, but it would have been unjust to have given it more than satisfaction. No more would be exacted than was necessary, more especially when one reflects on the painful, the humiliating nature of the exaction. To say that the sufferings of a creature could have atoned for sin, is to say that the sufferings of Jesus Christ the Creator were unnecessary ; whereas, can we admit another idea than that of some deep and mysterious necessity for the endurance to which He bowed Himself, an endurance so bitter as to extort from Him the prayers and the agonies of the garden ? What meaneth the supplication—Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me ? What else meaneth it but that, for the restoration of a guilty world, the drinking of the cup could not be dispensed with, the passing of it was not possible. With such light beaming upon the question from Scripture, with such informations from the sacred volume, it is not easy to resist the impression, that the expiation of sin required the offering up of a Divine sacrifice, and that by nothing short of it could reconciliation have been effected between the transgressor of the law and the offended Lawgiver. He who bare the chastisement of our peace, bare it in the strength of the God-

head, and the atonement He made for sin was an adequate atonement only because the dignity of the victim was commensurate with the dignity of that law which had been broken, and of that Sovereign from whom it had emanated.

When a conjunction is thus established between the Divinity of Christ and the efficacy of His sacrifice, it invests with more august and venerable sanctity the character of the Godhead ; it upholds, in high imperial state and sovereignty, His law ; it bespeaks, and by expression equivalent to infinity, the evil of sin ; it augments, and that to an unlimited degree, the gratitude of the redeemed—thus deepening the moral influence of all these lessons, and throwing an enhanced sacredness over the whole field of our religious contemplations.

You will now observe how it is that the testimonies, about the precise force and import of which we have been so long employed, and which go to demonstrate that Christ is the Creator of all things, supply a direct argument for the Divinity of Christ. Though Scripture does not seem to have made any very distinct intimations as to the incommunicability of the creative power to any created being, it has explicitly enough affirmed, that, in point of fact, God is the sole Creator of all things. This suffices for a firm reasoning on the subject, and makes the above testimonies that we have recently been examining just as decisive of the Godhead of Christ as the information given us by John in the first chapter of his Gospel. He does not tell us so by the one affirmation that Christ is God, but he does it by two affirmations, that Christ is the Word, and the Word is God. Neither when told that Christ is the Creator does that of itself tell us by one affirmation that Christ is God, but by help of another affirmation, to be found elsewhere in the Bible, that the Creator is God, we come solidly to the conclusion at the last, and from being made to know that Christ is the Creator, and that the Creator is God, we are as effectually told of the Divinity of Christ, as when made to know that Christ is the Word, and the Word is God.

BOOK III.—CHAP. V.

ACTIONS ASCRIBED TO JESUS IN HIS PRE-EXISTENT STATE.—
ADMINISTRATION OF PROVIDENCE.

THE PRAYER.

WE confess both our guilt and our frailty before thee, O God. But we rejoice that an omnipotent Saviour has undertaken our cause, that our pardon has been ratified by the blood of a divine sacrifice, and that He who poured out His soul to the death for us is now at Thy right hand, an intercessor and an advocate for all who put their trust in Him. As He is omnipotent to save, may we experience Him alike omnipotent to sanctify; and grant that through the working of that mighty power whereby He is able to subdue all things to Himself, He may subdue our rebellious wills and our headstrong affections into a conformity to Thy law. Be with us now and ever.—Amen.

I hold the argument expounded in this chapter, if not the most direct and decisive, to be the most interesting of any on the subject of the Divinity of Christ. It does not stand, as it were, on the surface of the Bible. It would not meet the glance of a cursory reader. It has to be gathered from a comparison of Scripture with Scripture; from an investigation, the result of which, however, is most satisfactory, landing as it does in a very beautiful discovery, and unfolding a system of operations on the part of Christ in behalf of mankind that may be traced through Scripture to the commencement of the earlier dispensation, and thus evinces the historical consistency between the Old and New Testament. There is one obvious inference, I think, to be drawn from this examination. How much more of information and truth may be drawn out of the Bible, when made the object of a diligent and severe scrutiny! We believe that the study of God's word is as interminable as the study of His works, and that there is in it a mine of hidden treasures which have not yet been unfolded. It is the remarkable experience of even plain Christians who have been in the constant and daily habit of reading Scripture, that

however frequently they may have accomplished the entire perusal of it, yet they never fail on every repetition of the task, to read it with new light, to draw from it new truths and before unobserved relations between truths already known, or new applications to human life and human nature. It stamps on the book a peculiarity which belongs to no other authorship. For in two or three perusals, you will draw out the whole meaning and spirit of a publication on any subject of mere human learning, or even on theology, apart from Bible quotations. But while you exhaust the compositions of men in this way, the Scripture is found to be inexhaustible. This stamps a peculiarity on the sacred volume that announces the Divinity which penned it. And this evidence is valid, whether you ascribe the phenomenon to the exceeding variety of its matter, with infinite susceptibilities of comparison and application, or to the doctrine that the Spirit enlightens by the word, and that in proportion to the largeness of His influences is the enlargement of manifestation experienced by an earnest reader on every new perusal of it.

There is a peculiar force in the argument for the Divinity of Christ drawn from this particular investigation, and grounded on a circumstance to which I have not yet adverted. The very circumstance of its being gathered from the incidental expressions of a narrative where the object was not any formal doctrinal statement of the truth which they establish, proves a recognition of the truth, and a proceeding upon it, which is often more impressive than a categorical statement. But besides this, to bring out the evidence, you have to compare Scripture with Scripture. It does not lie upon the surface—it does not force itself upon the observation of the superficial reader. It lies hidden, as it were, under the broad and general aspect of things, and forms one of those recondite harmonies which could not therefore have been devised for the purpose of imposition; but which, on this very account, leave the most satisfactory of all impressions as to the reality of that common subject to which they all relate. You will be reminded, in consequence of what I say, of the *Horæ Paulinæ* of Dr. Paley, where, from the hid-

den and undesigned coincidences which he establishes between one Scripture and another, he evinces the historical reality of the Apostle Paul, and of the transactions ascribed to him in the New Testament. An impostor might devise plausibilities that struck the observation on their first being presented, but he would not readily devise those plausibilities which require a deep and patient investigation for their discovery. And in like manner, whereas corrupt readings, forcible suppressions of the ancient texts, interpolations of new ones, have been charged on the orthodox, we ask you to consider how completely beyond the reach of any such imputation are those Scriptures which we have now been examining, and from the comparison of which we educe so impressive an argument for the Divinity of our Saviour. They would need, in fact, not merely to have changed single texts, but to have changed or to have destroyed the texture of whole passages; and all this, you will observe, to produce, not that semblance of evidence for a favourite doctrine which glares upon the general eye, but an evidence that needs laboriously to be sought after, and which had never been brought fully out till after the lapse of many generations from the time when the controversy was at its hottest, and when the partisans on both sides of the question have been accused certainly of undue liberties with Scripture—liberties however, let it well be understood, which could never have effected the general depraving of Scripture, or prevent us at present from approximating indefinitely near, and on the most abundant evidence, to the primitive state of the sacred writings.

You will here recollect the Socinian evasion from the sense in which the orthodox understand the appearance on Mount Sinai. We hold the angel there to have been a person, but they represent the angel to have been merely some material symbol of the Divine presence, whether the fire or the smoke or the thunder. They hold that God Himself held converse with the Israelites in the delivery of the decalogue, and, whereas it is said that it was the angel who held this converse, they lay that expression on a mere sensible indication, whether by light or by sound, that was given of His presence. Couple the

absurdity of their own hypothesis, the absurdity of this manifest evasion of theirs, with the soundness of their reasoning against the hypothesis of the Arians ; admit with Mr. Lindsay, admit with him, and in his own words, that the whole transaction at Mount Sinai shows that Jehovah was present, and that He Himself delivered there the ten commandments ; but refuse to him the liberty of contradicting Stephen in the Acts, who tells us that the identical Being named Jehovah in the Old Testament was the angel who appeared in the bush, was the angel which spoke, was not the light of the appearance or the sound of the words, as they would have it, but was a person who appeared and a person who spoke—and there remains between these a sound, an incontrovertible argument for the divinity of Christ.

One very great charm of the informations which relate to the identity that subsists between the angel of the covenant and Jesus Christ, is, that it connects in the closest manner the Old and New Testaments. It so binds and harmonizes the two dispensations, and gives us to perceive so clear a line of connexion and continuity between them. It unites them both in one comprehensive scheme, and the manner in which Christ Himself comes forth from heaven at certain successive points or evolutions of it, evinces most strikingly His intimate concern with and special management of the whole. It is delightful to catch, as it were, even these faint and incidental traces of the mysterious way along which one and the same great personage makes occasional presentation of Himself, and thus manifests His own busy agency and interest in the process that Himself did originate, and carries forward from its first commencement to its final consummation. We are aware of nothing which more gilds and glorifies the patriarchal ages than the truth of preternatural visitations made by the Saviour in His own person to Abraham and Jacob and Moses and Joshua. When we thus behold Him intromitting in person with that great moral enterprise which was so peculiarly His own, as at the first germ of it, when He called the father of the faithful from the land of his ancestors, and at its further ex-

pansion, when He brought the people out of Egypt, and gave the law from Mount Sinai, and brightened the tabernacle and the temple with His presence, and lastly, at its final consummation, when He veiled His glory in human nature, and sojourned on earth, and bowed down His head to the sacrifice, and, with the last accents of His expiring voice, cried out that it was finished, and gave up the ghost—I say, a progression of this sort, beginning with Genesis and having its ultimate outgoings in the Book of Revelation, stamps a glorious consistency on the Bible, and binds together in firm concatenation the Old and the New Testament. Apart from the affecting identification which has been established between the Saviour in Christianity and the angel of the covenant in Judaism, we can read in the Hebrew dispensation the lineaments of an infant resemblance to the perfect dispensation that followed it. But certain it is, that this pleasing discovery strengthens the association between them, and we do more confidently look for a sustained harmony throughout when we thus recognise the same fostering hand at the earlier passages of this great enterprise, and onward to its full and final consummation. We believe it to be the uniform finding of every intelligent and, at the same time, devout student of the Bible, that the more he is acquainted with the Old Testament the more will he discover it to be full of the Saviour. It is this, we think, which explains the growing taste and predilection of the aged Christian for its strains of earlier inspiration. He rejoices in finding the substance of his faith under the veil of these rites and ceremonies and symbols by which Israel's figurative Church was characterized, and it is not the less pleasing that it stands forth under another guise and in another attitude than he had been accustomed to behold it. We know that this affection for the types and double interpretations in the allegoric services of the Jewish ritual and prophecy has been ranked among the senilities of a decaying intellect; nevertheless the interest that is taken in them, though often the product of a warm imagination, is often also a most intelligent and well-founded interest, and not the less so though the general and superficial reader of his

Bible cannot sympathize with it. The truth is, that there are harmonies between the prefigurations of the law and the principles of the gospel, which do not reveal themselves at the first glance of a careless or rapid observer. But they are not less real or substantial notwithstanding. They are not the creations of fancy—they are the perceptions of a deep and steadfast prolonged observation, recondite only to those who do not carefully search for them; but because of their very reconditeness all the more satisfying when found, and all the more certain indications of the profoundness of that wisdom which presided over both the Jewish and the Christian economy, and so proving that the same God is the author and finisher of both. We know that mysticism has been charged on these speculations; but in appreciating the justice of this imputation, it is of prime importance to determine whether it arises from the subject in itself being unintelligible, or from the persons who make the charge not being intelligent in regard to it. In either way there will be the very same feeling of mysticism, a feeling not peculiar in reference to a matter not understood of Christianity, but in reference also to the matter not understood of any subject or of any science whatever. It is the very feeling wherewith the uninitiated are visited when they hear the doctrines of chemistry or botany or medicine propounded in the peculiar, and to them, unknown nomenclature of these respective branches of learning. It is a feeling which, I am quite confident, would be dissipated by a single month of study directed to the harmony that obtains between the doctrines of the New and the prophecies or ritual observances of the Old Testament. You will find that these both radiate and reflect an increasing light upon each other, and, as the fruit of your investigations, I promise you an ever-growing conviction, that in like manner as the testimony of Jesus has been called the spirit of prophecy, so you will find the same testimony to be the animating spirit that actuates and pervades from one end to the other the Scriptures of the olden dispensation.

BOOK III.—CHAP. VI.

DOCTRINE CONCERNING THE PERSON OF CHRIST TAUGHT DURING
HIS LIFE.

THE PRAYER.

WE draw nêar, O God, in the faith of Him on whom Thou hast laid the burden of our iniquities. Give us to see, in the expiation made by this illustrious Sufferer, what an evil and bitter thing it is to sin against God. Give us to behold, in the dignity of Thy Son, the dignity of that law which He hath magnified and made honourable. And now that its penalties are done away, grant that its precepts may be our rejoicing all the day long, and the constant reward of our obedience. Strengthen us, O God, by Thy Spirit for all the services of Christianity, and be with us.—Amen.

At this point, the author of our text-book seems to under-rate the achievement or effect of the argument already gone through. He speaks of having only yet disposed of the first opinion, and that the argument still remains between the second and third ; in other words, that he has only yet demonstrated against the Socinians how Christ is not a mere man, and that he has yet to demonstrate against the Arians that He is not a creature, however exalted above man, but that He is in very deed the eternal and uncreated God.

I think that this has been already demonstrated, and that the transition is not a firmer one between the two propositions of Christ being the Word, and the Word being God, than between the two propositions of Christ being the Creator, and the Creator being God.

If the only advantage, then, resulting from our thorough description of the remaining argument were to make out the position of Christ's divinity, this were a task that might be dispensed with. But I should hold our doing so to be the sacrifice of a most substantial benefit to our students of divinity. It is not only of the utmost professional importance to them that they should be told of the whole richness and power of the argument, but there is furthermore an incalculable good

in the familiarity which they will thereby acquire with the contents and character of the sacred volume. They have already had an example of this in the doctrine we have just gone over respecting the angel of the covenant, and they must be sensible of the insight which this furnishes into many passages of the Old Testament. The reader who peruses, as one instance out of the many, the sixty-eighth Psalm, with the newly acquired information that not the Father but the Son is personally and throughout the subject of it, will, I am persuaded, feel a novelty of interest, in the exercise of which he was before unconscious, and in like manner it will spread a peculiar aspect over many other places of the Jewish Scriptures when he recognises them to be so full of the Saviour. Now, it is an extension of this benefit which we should forego, were we either to pass superficially or to pass over altogether what remains of the text-book on the subject of the Trinity. We should lose by it a vast deal of scriptural information, there being much unfolded in what is before us respecting the sense as well as the substance of the sacred writings. And, then, we have still additional doctrine to acquire connected with this great article : after having discussed the additional evidence for the divinity of the Saviour, we have yet all to learn respecting the union of His divine and human nature, respecting the divinity of the Spirit, and, last of all, respecting the manner in which the separate propositions that the Father is God, that the Son is God, that the Holy Spirit is God, and that God is one—the manner in which these are united in the one complex and comprehensive proposition that is discussed in a future chapter on the doctrine of the Trinity. Neither the Scripture nor the Christian literature connected with these questions can possibly be omitted, but must be submitted to, whether as an exercise of patience or as an exercise of busy and most useful scholarship for some time yet, after which, when we come to the next doctrine in succession, to the depravity of human nature, there will be room for general argument in application to a matter that comes within the cognizance of our own independent consciousness, touching as it does on the character of

man—a topic within the reach of our own mental perceptions, unlike in this respect to the constitution of the Deity, of which in ourselves we absolutely know nothing, and can therefore do little more about it than simply ascertain and state the informations of the Bible.

I am assured that the method laid down in the text-book (see pp. 155, 156) is far more in the spirit of true induction, and therefore of true philosophy, than that prescribed by Dr. Clarke. He professes, no doubt, impartially to examine the whole Scriptures, and has grounded his conclusion on their general scope, but this is not really what he does in practice. He first examines one, and that, we admit, a very extensive set of passages, and with the impression taken thence, he addresses himself to another and equally extensive set of passages. He first passes in review those texts or testimonies from which we learn that Christ was sent by the Father, that He received all things from the Father, that He came to do the will of the Father, and on these he grounds the assertion of inferiority wherewith he would qualify the obvious sense of other texts and other testimonies which give distinct information of Christ being God, of His having power in Himself, of Christ being equal to the Father. Now this is not according to the philosophy of sound observation whether in theology or in science. It is as if we should examine one-half of the phenomena related to a given subject, and ground on these a universal proposition wherewith to warp and distort our observation of the other half; whereas the way is to make diligent and individual inspection of each and all of the phenomena, and to ground on such a completed survey a proposition still more comprehensive than the former, because including in it both the generalities that each set of phenomena had suggested, and admitting, on the authority of observation, the truth of both. Should we not see how it is that the one separate generality harmonizes with the other, that is no reason why we shall resist the evidence obtruded by the facts of the case that so it is. The truth is, that Dr. Clarke's method, though not wholly, is in part the method of those who would subject the testimonies of God to the fancies of man. The only

difference is, that they set forth on their survey of the whole Scripture with the pre-occupation of a theory derived from their own resources, and to this they would subordinate every deposition of the sacred volume. He again goes forth with a theory grounded on so many depositions of the sacred volume, and thus pre-occupied, he would subordinate to it all its remaining depositions. Now the way both in science and theology is to be a strict examiner of all the phenomena in the one, the rigid expounder of all the passages in the other out and out—to generalize the informations thus obtained as far as we can generalize them, and should we not be able to find out the vinculum which connects one generality with another, still to believe that they are reconcilable, though we cannot reconcile them.

Let me here remark of Dr. Clarke, that whereas he seems to hold the absolute divinity of Christ in the light of a preconception wherewith men go forth upon Scripture and transform its passages, it is in truth the fruit of a completed induction of passages, whereas his modification of the doctrine is the fruit, not of a completed, but a partial induction. However the doctrine of the Trinity may operate now when installed into the mind by catechisms previous to our full examination of Scripture, certain it is that the formation of that doctrine was the result of a full and finished observational survey carried over the whole length and breadth of the sacred volume. It is an utter misconception that it has been imported into the formularies of the orthodox through the influence of a prior imagination that possessed a kind of transmuting power on the plain and natural meaning of Scripture. It is, in fact, the result of its plain and natural meanings carefully collected, a compendious expression of the truth, no doubt, yet not an expression on which to ground the sense of the Bible, but an expression itself grounded on that sense. It is not the article which directs our understanding of the Scripture passages, it is the passages that directed the understandings of men at the framing of the article, and that still direct us when we give our consent to it.

One can perceive how, in virtue of the operation adverted to in the text—the illumination of the Spirit shed on the Saviour's

conversation, (vol. ii. pp. 158, 159,)—the evidence of their own inspiration would be greatly brightened and augmented in the mind of the apostles. It is quite palpable that many of our Saviour's communications upon earth were met by the grossest misconception on the part of His disciples. We often read of their eyes being held so that they perceived not the meaning of that saying. It looks strange to us that their understandings should have been so impracticable as to be proof even against what to our mind appear very plain and intelligible declarations. But we are in possession of a cipher which they had not. We are pre-occupied with doctrine which had not been revealed, and which ran counter to all their notions and expectations at the time. There is the truth of nature in the description given by the evangelists of the disciples' slowness of understanding and slowness of belief; and to enter fully into their situation, we must remember the inveteracy of Jewish prejudice, and also the way in which obscure announcements of the suffering in reserve, might, by agitating their feelings, only serve to thicken their perplexities the more. There is nothing in the way of internal evidence that strikes me as more palpable than the historical consistency of the Gospels, on the one hand, with the Acts and the Epistles, taken in connexion with the fact of that great spiritual illumination which came upon the apostles on the day of Pentecost, and dispersed all doubt and all remaining darkness or difficulty away from them. Who can fail to perceive the difference between the timid, the irresolute, the half-informed apostles before the resurrection, and the bold, decisive, confirmed style of perfect assurance and self-possession wherewith they both spoke and acted after it. It would have required a very skilful dramatist, indeed, to have constructed a fictitious narrative with so much truth in the representation of character, and conduct so harmonizing with the representation there given of the historical circumstances and changes that took place, and which can alone account for it. They know now what explained all and harmonized all that had so much embarrassed them in the days of their companionship with the Saviour on earth. From the vantage-ground of their now full and finished

revelation they could look back and perceive the significance and the consistency of all that had puzzled their understandings in the days of their yet uncorrected prejudices ; and what between the Spirit bringing all things which our Saviour said to their recollection, and their perception now of the full meaning of these things, compared with the blindness and insensibility of other days, it would serve to establish all the more their confidence in the supernatural light wherewith they were now visited, and which at once brought new truth to their mind, and shed a powerful and pleasing radiance over that which they before had heard with their ears, but which to them had been either utterly meaningless or lay shrouded in deepest mystery.

Whatever deliverance you may come to respecting the passage John x. 29, 30, &c., after having heard the controvertists state their respective arguments on the peculiar ground of Scripture criticism, there is one consideration not derived through the medium of the Greek, yet, I think, a very powerful consideration in determining our judgment on the question. We can perceive how, on the supposition of our Saviour's divinity, He might, in agreement with His general policy throughout His life, have spoken doubtfully or obscurely, for a premature and full disclosure respecting His divinity might have been just as inconvenient in the present state of His disciples' minds as a premature disclosure respecting His death. Both these matters were gradually opened up to them, and they were told not all at once of the mysteries of the kingdom of Christ, but were told as they were able to bear them. This will explain how it is that our Saviour, on the supposition of His being very God, did not comply with the requisition of the Jews, did not tell them plainly. But take the other supposition—take the supposition that He was not God, and then think of the imperious call that lay upon Him to make a distinct and authoritative disavowal of it. He saw the effect of what He had already said, He saw the interpretation that His countrymen were giving to His words: they held Him to be putting Himself forth as God. Would He not have disclaimed, and that most promptly, the arrogant pretension, if arrogant pretension in-

deed it was? Would the meek and the lowly Jesus for one moment have suffered this delusion? Would He have permitted a single hearer to indulge the imagination of Himself being God if He really were not so? And is it at all in keeping with what we know of His character, that He, at the expense of the honour exclusively due to the Father, should have misled every friend He had at this conference to ascribe a greatness to Himself infinitely higher than what really belonged to Him? And would He, the example and the teacher of piety, have countenanced so flagrant a delusion? Would He Himself have made blasphemous usurpation of divine honours, or deceived others into a form of idolatry? Is this the way in which He would have honoured the Father? And can we for a moment imagine the humble and unambitious Jesus of Nazareth actuated by the vanity of the Roman emperors, and seeking, as they did, a place among the gods? Yet all this would follow if the effect of His words was not merely to incense His enemies, who understood that He called Himself God, but grossly to mislead His friends, who, on finding that He disavowed not the imputation, would understand the same thing; and we cannot figure a more imperative call to speak plainly than on the present occasion—to say, in a way that could not be mistaken, He was not God if He really was not.

John xx. 28.—The declaration of Thomas. This is a very direct instance of misleading His own peculiar disciples, even as the former ones were of misleading both them and his countrymen at large, on the part of Jesus Christ, if He, a creature, thus suffered them to indulge in their own interpretation, whether of His words or His actions, and that interpretation evidently was that He held Himself forth as God. More especially does the instance before us contrast very strikingly with another recorded in the book of Revelation, where John was addressed by a voice from heaven, and on falling down to worship him from whom it proceeded, was most promptly rebuked and prevented: "See that thou do it not, I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus;" after which there follows a magnificent description of Him on

the white horse that was faithful and true, called the Word of God, and having a divine title ascribed to him—"King of kings, and Lord of lords." There was the utmost alertness on the part of the fellow-servant to protect the writer of the prophecy from the delusion of honouring the creature as God, but none either to protect the writer or the reader of the prophecy from ascribing divinity to Him whose description immediately follows, even Him who, called the Logos, has the name written upon His vesture, of King of kings, and Lord of lords.

On the whole, then, there seems in the Gospels a beautiful keeping and harmony between the degree of light cast on this particular doctrine, and the degree of light cast in the same portion of Scripture on the other peculiar doctrines of Christianity. We have to the full as much of the Trinity there as we have of the Atonement there, or of sanctification by the Holy Spirit there, or, in general, of the spiritual nature of Christianity there. All these truths may be described in the writings of the evangelists, but through a sort of twilight medium; nor do we meet with them fully shone upon in the Bible till after the illumination of the day of Pentecost we meet them in the Epistles, which are the products of that illumination. We, of course, except the remarkable passage in John's gospel, when he speaks in his own person as a teacher, and not as a narrator, whose single business was to record the words and actions of the Saviour. It is pleasant to recognise in this dawn of Christianity the truth in question, in, at least, as great a comparative distinctness as things seen in the obscurity of early morn bear to the same things seen in the broad sunshine of the risen day.

Romans ix. 5.—"It is further to be added, that the earliest Christian writers who quote this passage appear by the course of the argument to understand it as a plain declaration, that Christ is God over all, blessed for ever. It is so rendered in the most ancient versions, and the possibility of another interpretation was not suggested till the sixteenth century. If the Apostle there did not mean to give these titles to Jesus, he employs a form of expression in which the natural grammatical

construction of the words misled the whole Christian Church for fifteen hundred years."—Vol. ii. p. 188.

This no doubt is a most unlikely supposition. More especially when you couple it with the extreme unlikelihood of Scripture being so penned as to mislead the Church into so lengthened and universal a deception. Nothing can be more distinct and declared than the charges against idolatry under the Jewish dispensation, nothing at this rate can be more distinct and declared than the authorities on the side of idolatry under the Christian dispensation. The readers of the Bible were most naturally and necessarily led into it; and not till an ingenious violence was done to the verse in question, after the lapse of fifteen centuries, was it disarmed of its power to lure every plain reader of the Bible into a deadly error. In the contests of Scripture criticism, one is apt to lose a fresh and powerful impression of the obvious sense, even though the argumentative establishment of that sense has been the result of a contest. But we think a consideration to which we have often adverted, and which we now state over again, is of great efficacy in restoring the confidence which controversy is fitted to shake. It is a popular argument, but not on that account the less effective, and you will find that it bears you safely through many of the controverted passages upon this question.

You will perceive from the account given in our text-book of the introduction and usage of the word *ομοουσιος*,* what that often was which gave rise to an artificial language of theology. It was not adopted spontaneously or in the mere wantonness of speculation. It was forced upon the Church by the practical necessity of instituting a safeguard against error. The orthodox would have satisfied themselves with a creed whose articles were rendered in the phraseology of Scripture, had not that phraseology been wrested to their face, and the obvious sense of it formally and expressly denied. The restoration of Scripture was no adequate defence against this perversity. Scripture, and a wrong sense of Scripture, are not the two elements which came into competition with each other. The two elements are, a right sense of Scripture and a wrong sense of Scrip-

* See vol. ii. p. 194.

ture. Now it is not by merely going over and over the *ipsissima verba* of Scripture that you express this sense. A discussion about the sense, and a statement founded on that discussion, necessarily implies the use of other language than that of Scripture itself. The contest was not between Scripture and a wrong meaning of Scripture. But the contest was between men who ascribed one meaning to Scripture, and men who ascribed another meaning to it, in which case human language even on the right side of the question was unavoidable.

BOOK III.—CHAP. VII.—SECT. III.

WORSHIP REPRESENTED AS DUE TO JESUS.

THE PRAYER.

LIFT on us, O God, the light of Thy countenance. Enable us to behold Thee as our reconciled Father in Christ Jesus our Lord. Elevate our affections above the things of earth to the things of heaven, and give us a realizing sense of Thine upper sanctuary, where God sitteth on the throne of glory, and Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. May the faith of what is unseen and eternal, prevail over the seducing influences of what is seen and temporal; and by the Spirit given to us from on high, may we be enabled to live as the disciples of the Saviour, and the expectants of that immortality which He hath purchased for us.

These testimonies (see vol. ii. p. 204) respecting the worship due to Jesus Christ, appear to me very impressive evidences of His divinity. And the strength of them is founded upon this, the exceeding jealousy of God in regard to the creature obtaining that worship that was due to the Creator. There is something, we admit, indefinite in the term. We are aware that the same terms have been at times applied to express the homage of respect given to God and to a fellow-mortal, but notwithstanding this there is a high, nay, a peculiar style of worship, which God claims as exclusively His own, and our own feelings can attest the difference between the religious veneration of which God is the object, and that respectful veneration rendered by men to their superiors in society. Now if the worship to be

rendered to Jesus is described in the highest terms of possible exaltation—if there be no possibility of discriminating between it and that which is spoken of as right to be rendered to God in general—if He be the object of prayer, of religious appeal as to the searcher of hearts, of adoration not to man only, but to angels, to all the angels, what else can we infer than that He is indeed God? Continually keep in remembrance, and for the purpose of preserving the strength and emphasis of this argument, that the confounding of God with inferior creatures, and more particularly in worship, is just the offence of which the Almighty is most intolerant, that this principle runs through the whole economy of the Old and New Testament, that it originated the older dispensation, and it may be regarded as the characteristic triumph of the new, that it completely established it. Take into account, along with these high awards of blessing and honour and glory and power to Him that sitteth on the throne and to the Lamb, God's strong abhorrence of aught like usurpation in the matter of religious address or religious adoration. The verse (Rev. v. 13) appears to me peculiarly striking and forcible, because it attaches the same form of address and adoration to the Father and to the Son. The same *solemnia verba* which were not too low for the one, were not too high for the other; and it really is to my mind a most satisfactory establishment of the equality between the two persons, that in the very thing respecting which God most insisted on a distinction being kept up between Him and all His inferiors—we mean in the matter of religious worship and benediction, the very words which are ascribed to the Father are ascribed to the Son. It is this also which gives a high character as testimonies for the dignity and divinity of Christ, to the blessings that occur so often at the commencement and end of the various Epistles. Look over them particularly, and you will often meet with blessings of as high a character, sometimes identically the same, invoked on those whom the Apostle is addressing, from the Son as from the Father, thus intimating an equal power of dispensing good things, as well as an equal title to be addressed in terms of celestial adoration.

BOOK III.—CHAP. VIII.

UNION OF NATURES IN CHRIST.

THE PRAYER.

THOU sittest, O God, on a throne of holiness, yet we approach Thee with confidence, because of the new and living way of access that has been consecrated thereto. We would do homage to the Son in all our approaches to the Father. We make mention of Him as our intercessor and our advocate, and we desire that the incense of His merits might be mingled with our supplications. May they thus rise before Thee, O God, with acceptance, and be answered in peace. For His sake, pardon our iniquities; for His sake, purify our natures, and render us meet for that inheritance of the saints, where Thy servants shall ever serve Thee. Be with us now and ever.—Amen.

You may remember the distinction I have already insisted on between the *theologia didactica* and the *theologia elenctica*, and on what principle I attempted to justify the latter in its deviations from the language of Scripture. A pure *theologia didactica* institutes a survey and comparison of all the Bible passages which relate to a given subject, and out of them it constructs a generalized expression of the truth common to them all, which truth thus announced, and as nearly as may be in Scripture language, forms one of its articles. But should this article be controverted, it is not either by a mere reiteration of the article, or by the reiteration of any one of the Scripture passages which helped to establish it, that the controversy can be settled. The argument of the gainsayers must be redargued, and that, too, in terms adapted to meet and to neutralize their terms, and phraseology fitted to express a counter-testimony against that error which they had put forth in their phraseology, not merely in language that might adequately propound the truth of God, but in language that might adequately protest against the errors of man. It is thus that a translation was called for; and had the defenders of orthodoxy just limited themselves to the object of so adjust-

ing the statement of their articles as to make it express with accuracy the scriptural doctrine or the scriptural information, and at the same time put an extinguisher on the perversions of human sophistry, this would have been quite legitimate, and an ample vindication would have been possible of the scholastic style of divinity, notwithstanding its difference and deviation from the scriptural style of it. But in truth the defenders of orthodoxy went further than this. They did not limit themselves to a mere adjustment of the language for the legitimate purposes which we have now specified. They meddled with the subject and carried their speculations in it a great deal further than the informations of the Bible at all warranted them. This, you will observe, is a wholly distinct case of difference and deviation between the scholastic and the scriptural from the former; and it were well to discriminate them, for while the one is most justifiable, and was in practice most expedient and necessary, the other has misled even the Church and the orthodox into lamentable extravagancies of speculation, and laid open the whole subject of the Trinity in particular, with its cognate and correlative topics, to the ridicule of the profane, to the merciless satire and severity of the infidel.

It is the ambition of being wise above that which is written that has led to these wretched aberrations from all sound theology. They might have been satisfied with the fact of the union of the divine and human nature in Christ; what business had they to speculate about the mode of union, or to disgust the world with their untasteful crudities, fetched from the arcana of a subject on which Scripture had spread a veil of decency? In respect to the method, therefore, of the union of the humanity and divinity in Christ, I will say nothing; but I am unwilling to leave off this subject, without giving you at least one specimen taken from the fancies of men respecting the mode of union between the three persons of the Trinity. It will lead you to appreciate what I hold to be an important distinction between one thing and another in the history of theological speculation, to distinguish between that which is right, when they substituted other language for that of Scrip-

ture, in order to put down the misrepresentation of the heretical, and that which was wrong when they made their daring excursions beyond the subject-matter of Scripture. They could have put Bible truths in other language, yet kept within the limits of Bible information, and so we quarrel not with the unscriptural terms of Trinity, and person, and *ομοουσιον*; but there was no warrant whatever for going forth of the limits of Bible information, and so coming forth if not with antisciptural at least with unscriptural positions respecting the mode of derivation either of the Son from the Father, or of the Spirit from the Father, or of the Spirit from the Father and the Son. And so the specimen which I have to offer on this subject is taken from the controversy between the eastern and the western Churches in regard to the procession of the Spirit from the Father and the Son, when, after having determined that the Son was derived from the Father by generation, and the Spirit from both the Father and the Son by procession, a notable question was started—a question even entertained by Turretin—whether this was a procession by the Father and the Son separately, or a procession from the Father through the Son? The bare mention of it is distressing enough, and I just advert to it for one painful moment for the single purpose of bidding you not confound a deviation from Scripture language, grounded on a real necessity that occurred in the history of the Church, from the deviations not into different language only, but really into different and additional matter, grounded on the mere wantonness of human speculation. The example I have given, and all like examples, I would bid instantly away from my attention; and they are such wretched imaginations as these that so endear to me the admirable tact and judgment which appear in the deliverance of Calvin, who wanted no more to be said and no more to be speculated than that the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit are one God, yet that the Son is not the Father, nor the Spirit the Son, but that they are distinct from each other by some peculiarity.

Dr. Hill gives us sufficient specimens of the wantonness of

theological speculation, which I trust you know how to distinguish from that legitimate doing of the Church, the object of which was so to define their articles as that they might present a safeguard against the unscriptural errors of those whose tenets were most clearly opposed to the obvious meaning of Scripture. This latter can be done without going beyond the limits of the subject-matter in the Bible. The former, again, is ever transgressing that limit, and trying to explore what Scripture has left unrevealed, to find out what Scripture has nowhere told us. But while I prefer this charge against many of the heretics, I cannot acquit the Church altogether of blame in the matter either. There is in fact a number of the speculations that it would have been far better if the Church had taken no cognizance of at all. This clearly applies to all those questions which lie without the limit of scriptural information. If it was wrong in the sectaries to go beyond that limit in pronouncing on any of these questions in their own way, it must just be equally wrong in the Church to follow them beyond that limit, and pronounce upon the question in her other way. There may not merely be an error in the special deliverance on one side or other, there may be also an error common to both sides in taking up the question at all, or giving any deliverance whatever on the subject. There is surely much as respects the composition of the divine and human nature in Christ—much that lies altogether beyond the range either of Bible statement or of human observation, and I would therefore greatly have preferred that the Church instead of interposing had suffered many an idle question to effervesce itself out, without holding any notice of or any decision on the subject to be at all incumbent upon it. In this wisdom, and this meekness of wisdom, the Church, we fear, has been greatly deficient in all ages. There has been an extent of sensitive vigilance, in virtue of which, when not called upon to say anything, it nevertheless came forward with peremptory articles, when it would have been far better to have abstained from the question altogether, either as a question that ministers not to godly edifying, or as a question which, naturally above the

reach of all the controvertists on all sides, made it the wise and the becoming part of the Church to pass it over in silence.

The spirit of these observations is in keeping with the principle on which I ventured to offer my decision on the question of inspiration, when, instead of entering into the hidden methods of the production, I limited my opinion to the palpable qualities of the product. In like manner, I would say on the present question, that without feeling myself qualified, either by Scripture or philosophy, for pronouncing on the nature of a union which in its principle is inexplicable, I would say, that Christ was as much man as that we have the benefit of His example, the benefit of the fellow-feeling of His human sympathies, the benefit of the atonement effected by His death ; and that, on the other hand, He is as much God as to make Him the object of my supreme religious reverence and regard.

In passing this condemnation even on the orthodox, I think I am fully borne out by all the passages—they are four in number—where Paul touches on those questions—not where one is scripturally wrong and another scripturally right—but those questions where a decision is either not practicable or of no practical value. It is remarkable that they all occur in his addresses to Timothy and Titus. To Christian ministers, therefore, who take a prominent part and have a literary interest in the discussion of these matters, which we do not meet with in the bulk of private Christians, I hold Paul's directions in this particular to afford another exemplification of that profound wisdom, the constant manifestation of which impresses such a character of divinity on the sacred volume. In the first of these passages, he admonishes in regard to the questions which are not for edifying, not to pronounce either one thing or other upon them, but to give no heed to them : “ Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions rather than godly edifying, which is in faith.” In the second, he sharply rebukes him who dotes about such questions : “ He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and des-

titute of the truth." In the third, he advises not to entertain such questions with a view to a deliverance either on one side or other, but to avoid them : " But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes." And lastly, he in substance gives the same admonition to Titus that he did to Timothy : " But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law, for they are unprofitable and vain." We think that had the Church acted in the spirit of these admonitions, there is many a sect and many a denomination that would never have been heard of, it being the uncalled for notice of the Church which exalted them into importance. It ought never to interfere, save where Scripture is obviously contravened, or when the consequences of any speculation would land in results subversive of the morality of Scripture.

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There is a considerable difference even among the orthodox on the question respecting the duration of the mediatorial kingdom ;* though on comparing the text-book with Turretin, it is perhaps more in name than in substance. There can be no doubt that the passage in the Corinthians (1 Cor. xv. 24) refers to the accomplishment and the surrender of the commission wherewith the Son had been vested, and this by some of the Trinitarians is held to be the termination of the mediatorial economy, and the giving up of the mediatorial kingdom. Now, they who with Turretin affirm that this mediatorial kingdom is eternal, allow that there are respects in which the mediation of Christ will cease, because in these respects the mediatorial work is finished. The salvation of His people is no longer to be acquired, for this He did for them by His death and His obedience upon earth. Neither is this salvation any longer to be applied, for this is already over in behalf of all His disciples who obtained from Him the Spirit to prepare them for heaven, and are at length everlastingly fixed in the heaven which He also prepared for them. But then, unwilling that the mediatorial kingdom should come to an end, this great master in

* See vol. ii. p. 247.

theology has conceived a necessity for its continuance in the preservation of the salvation thus obtained and thus applied—a matter truly on which I must confess myself unable to decide, lacking that clear scriptural information upon the subject without which it is my profound feeling that I cannot tell.

On the other hand, they who deny the affirmation of Turretin, and contend for the termination of the mediatorial economy, concede as much in the way of qualifying their different proposition, as serves with his concessions and qualifications to bring the respective controvertists marvellously near to each other. They hold that there is nothing farther to be done in the way of mediatory offices, but that the recognition of Christ the Mediator will be everlasting—that gratitude to Him who had redeemed them from their sins in His blood will be the song of eternity—that the human nature of Christ will adhere to Him for ever, seeing that in the description of heaven, the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are said to be the temple of it, and the glory of God and the Lamb to be the light thereof. The Lamb, also, which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them to living fountains of waters. The kingdoms, too, of the world are to become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ; and, to mark the closeness and perpetuity of the union between the Saviour and the saved, it is described under the form of a marriage between Him and those blessed who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb. On these verses, indeed, Turretin grounds the argument for the continuance and against the cessation of the mediatorial functions. But instead of intruding into the things which we have not yet seen, I incline, through this whole speculation, to be as general as the Bible is general.

In reference to this passage,* however, let it be remarked, that on both sides of the question there is a consent and concurrence in the position that, whether the reign of Christ, *qua* Mediator, is finished or not, He reigns in virtue of His essential Divinity, equally participating with the Father in the glory of the ascription to God as being all in all. They agree in ex-

* 1 Cor. xv. 24-28.

plaining the subjection of the Son to the Father as but denoting the subjection of His humanity ; and differing though they do in their understanding of this mysterious announcement, they are equally zealous in upholding the glories of His essential nature.

Let me refer you, if you have any further curiosity, to Poole's Synopsis and the eighteenth question of the twelfth Locus of Turretin. The question is, *An regnum mediatorium Christi in æternum sit duraturum?* On the whole my impression is, that he has made out a good case, though, I must confess, my sense of the obscurity of Scripture on the subject has led me to regard it as practically unimportant, and so prevented its taking any strong hold on me.

It is to the credit of the wisdom of the Church of Scotland that, in its Confession of Faith, there is no deliverance upon the subject.

BOOK III.—CHAP. IX.

OPINIONS CONCERNING THE SPIRIT.

THE PRAYER.

IN Thy light, O God, may we clearly see light. May we cease not giving earnest heed to the word of Thy prophecy, till the day dawn and the day-star arise in our heart. May Thy Spirit lay hold of Thy word as His instrument, and thereby work powerfully within us, convincing us of sin, and convincing us of our need of a Saviour. We rejoice in Thy pure testimonies. We cherish the belief that Thine is the immaculate word of revelation, and that not one jot or one tittle of it shall fail. Give us to yield an unreserved obedience of the faith to its doctrines, of the practice to its commandments, and to experience that all of it is profitable. Be with us now and ever.—Amen.

We may be very sure that all Scripture is profitable, and more particularly that the truths implied in that formula, if it may be so called, pronounced over every Christian at his initiation

into the visible Church, must have had a fundamental place and importance in Christianity. That belief which they were required to profess ere they could be admitted into the society of believers, as it should have a foremost place in the creed, so should it have a frequent place in the habitual and recurring contemplations of every Christian. There must then be a serious defect of sentiment or of mental habitude in us if there be a want of distinct reference on our part to these three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, in our habitual religious contemplations. But here it may be thought that we require a clear insight into what is not clear—a constant attempt to give a separate occupancy in our thoughts to objects inseparable—a straining of the intellect to disengage from each other as distinct matters of thought what is mysteriously blended into one—to penetrate what is fathomless—to comprehend what is incomprehensible. This, I believe, is what has come of the impracticable speculations of men respecting the Trinity. The great endeavour of the Church has been to adjust the general and complex proposition in such a way as to make sure that each of its members admit all the separate and scriptural propositions which enter into it. The moral influence does not lie in the doctrine of the Trinity viewed as a whole. It comes directly and distinctly forth from each of its elementary or constituent truths. It is not the being correctly or learnedly taught in the physical constitution of the Deity which is profitable to holiness. It is not the unravelling of the enigma that works this effect. We ask you not to comprehend an intricate combination, but to dwell on that which may be simply apprehended, even that the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God; and remember that the practical good of this contemplation is not founded on the manner in which these three are united in one Godhead—it is founded on the relations in which each of them stands to ourselves. There may be neither clearness nor any distinct religiousness of impression in the compound doctrine of the Trinity; while each peasant may understand and may be powerfully and practically affected by the consideration that he has the Father for the

Divine principle of his being, that he has Christ for a Divine Saviour, that he has the Holy Spirit for a Divine Sanctifier.

We require him not to reconcile the distinct personality of each of these with the unity of the Godhead ; but we say that a great deal of practical religion lies in the personal regards which he owes to each of them. It not only gives him a deeper sacredness of reverence for the law of God when He reflects on the strength of a Divine personage being put forth to avert from himself the penalties of its infraction ; but the gratitude due to this person, the devotedness of heart and of service to His will, the confidence in His willingness and ability to save, the special regards of trust and affection which belong to Him as the Mediator between God and man—these rank among the elementary principles of the Christian life. And then, in regard to the Holy Spirit, whom we are apt still more frequently to lose sight of, both in regard to the distinctness of His person and the distinctness of His agency, we feel assured that an adequate recognition of Him would be of the utmost benefit to the interests of practical Christianity. The truth is, that in like manner as the Divinity of the Son stands forth more prominently, though not more firmly established in Scripture, than the Divinity of the Spirit, and so our contemplation of the one is apt to overshadow our contemplation of the other, we are furthermore afraid that the peculiar work of the Holy Ghost in the matter of the sinner's salvation is more, thus to speak, in the background of the Christian's habitual regards, than the peculiar work of Jesus Christ. In other words, we doubt that the atonement has a higher place in the creed and the estimation of many than the sanctification has. And we should hold it a corrective to this unfortunate tendency, if it were brought more frequently and more noticeably out by ministers in the hearing of their people, that as it required the forthgoing of one Divine personage to effectuate the removal of their guilt, so it requires the forthgoing of another Divine personage to effectuate the renewal of their nature.

It should constantly be pressed upon their attention, and the argument grounded on the respective functions of the Son and

of the Spirit would help to force it the more upon their convictions, that their purification is just as integral a part of their whole redemption as their pardon is—that they must either partake of both or have no part nor lot in the matter at all—that the very apparatus, as it were, of the economy which has been set up in heaven for the restoration of man may instruct what are the parts in which this restoration essentially consists—that if, on the one hand, the sacrifice by a Divine atonement has been provided, on the other, the regeneration by a Divine influence has been equally provided ; and if you dissever these two component parts of our salvation, you may as well offer to break up the celestial economy that has been instituted for the purpose of carrying it into effect—you may as well make free with the Divinity Himself, and try to inflict mutilation on the constitution of the Godhead.

On the distinct practical regards due to the Holy Spirit I must forbear at present to expatiate. That such is our helplessness in ourselves, and such the obstinate and, by all created means, the incurable depravity of our nature, as to call for the interposition of a Divine agent, is of itself a sentiment of great practical effect towards both the commencement and the progress of our regeneration, weaning us from all dependence on our own powers, and putting us into an attitude of dependence and prayer towards Him who alone can bestow the grace sufficient for us, who alone can perfect strength in our weakness.

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At the time of baptism not only was a faith professed in the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, but idolatry was specially renounced. You will observe here the very strong application that might be made of the argument on this subject which we have repeatedly insisted on—we mean that grounded on the sacred intolerance which is manifested throughout the whole of Scripture for the errors of idolatry, and therefore the total improbability of such divine-like ascriptions being given to the Son or to the Holy Spirit, if either the Son or the Holy Spirit belonged to the rank of the subordinate and the created. I must not insist at greater length upon this, but may point your notice at least to

the circumstance of the initiated being required at baptism solemnly to renounce idolatry, and then the following up of this renunciation by the *solemnia verba* of a form which most naturally leads all who come under it to render the highest celestial homage to the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, in whose name they were initiated into the way of salvation.

BOOK III.—CHAP. X.

DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY.

THE PRAYER.

WE profess, O Lord, our continued dependence upon Thee. Give us to cultivate a perpetual and an affectionate sense of it, and may the habitual exercise of our mind be that of communion with Thyself all the day long. May we not lose sight of God when engaged in the business of the world. May we remember that there are duties for all the occasions of life, and that in no moment of time is man left to the solitary independence of his own movements. Give us therefore to live constantly under the sense of Thy presence, and to act constantly on the principle of obedience to Thy will.

I think it quite judicious to finish off this whole matter with the doctrine of the Trinity instead of beginning with that doctrine; or, in other words, to discuss the evidence for the elementary propositions first, and then show how they have been formed into a complex and comprehensive proposition, instead of taking up the completed and comprehensive article at the outset. I am not sure that the advantage of this is thoroughly understood. Even Moses Stuart, in his work upon the subject, judicious as he is, might have improved, I think, the order of his argument, by discussing first the evidence of the elementary propositions, and then showing how the doctrine of the Trinity is but a generalized expression for these, instead of grappling with the metaphysical difficulties of the combined proposition at the outset of his discussion. The true representa-

tion of the case in regard to the doctrine of the Trinity is, that we have been led, by clear scriptural evidence, to believe in certain positions, each, by itself, simple and easy to be apprehended, but that these do land us in a difficulty when we attempt, what Scripture nowhere attempts, to demonstrate their consistency with each other. Taken in this order, belief in the doctrine of the Trinity is the result of an inductive process, and our adherence to that belief in the face of the inexplicable difficulties which are involved in it, is just in the very character of a true Baconian or experimental philosopher; when, on the evidence of facts, he resolutely credits them as facts, though utterly at a loss for their reasons or their principles. The other way, of beginning with the complex or comprehensive proposition before you have discussed the evidence of the separate ones, gives a certain *a priori* character to the whole speculation, and has the effect, I think, of exhibiting it with less of that character of strength and rationality and sound criticism, which in theology is sound observation, than really belong to it.

It is truly instructive to observe* that the only verse which was conceived to give a scriptural expression of what I have called the complex or comprehensive proposition, is given up, and, I believe, warrantably and rightly given up, by the great majority of critics. All Scripture is profitable; and if the separate propositions are clearly expressed there, but not the general one, what is this to say but that the main edification and practical benefit of the doctrine lay in its elementary truths, and not in the generalized article which the controversialists have drawn out of it? We dispute not the soundness of their deduction, we dispute not the necessity of a generalized expression in opposition to heretics who set themselves in opposition even to the separate and elementary truths; but when we find that these truths, instead of being exhibited in conjunction in the Bible, are brought forward in almost every instance individually and by themselves, what is this but to say that the great moral and practical influence of this revelation lies in our being made to know that the Son, our Saviour, is God, and that

* See vol. ii. p. 273.

the Spirit, our Sanctifier, is God? It is delightful to understand that in preaching we have not to perplex ourselves with the adjustments of the schoolmen, which, though they did achieve the service of lifting up a safeguard against the influence of heresy, did not, at the same time, change the essential quality of scriptural truth, or the power of that truth when scripturally stated and enforced on the consciences of men. I cannot too earnestly or repeatedly insist upon it, that your business in the pulpit is to be expounders of the scriptural and not expounders of the scholastic theology. It is indeed remarkable that there is no explicit assertion of the union between the persons in the Godhead in the Bible, however fairly, and, indeed, irresistibly, that union is deducible from the separate propositions which enter into the doctrine of the Trinity. Still we never find it brought forward in this general form for any moral or practical purpose, as our Saviour's divinity is, for example, to enforce the virtue of condescension and humility. Indeed, whether any moral was expressly founded or not on the separate proposition of Christ being God and the Spirit being God, the relations in which they respectively stand to us, the offices which they discharge in our behalf, give the highest practical consequence to the information that each of them is divine. I should like if, as the result of our earnest and oft-recurring observations on this topic, you learned to disengage the scholastic from the scriptural when enforcing from the pulpit any of the doctrines which are related to the Trinity; and I should further rejoice if, in virtue of the frequency wherewith we have applied it, it were impressed on you as a general principle that might be carried over the whole extent of doctrinal theology.

Let me not be understood, however, as meaning to convey, that because inexpedient in the pulpit, these articles of an artificial theology were useless to the Church. They served an important purpose; and, in point of fact, Arianism was unheard of many centuries after the termination of the Nicene controversy, during which period the elementary propositions might have been enforced on the consciences of men without disturb-

ance. The truth is, that profound controversy and profound Scripture criticism stand to right pulpit doctrine very much in the same relation. Neither will extend very materially the domain of religious truth, but each fulfils a high and important function by the line of circumvallation which they throw around the domain, by the barriers which they have presented against the incursions of heresy. This service has been alike accomplished by our polemics and our philologists; but it follows not that our pastors should introduce either the argumentation of the one or the criticism of the other into the pulpit. They have, however, done inestimable good notwithstanding, in that they have warded off the invasions of heresy, and thrown a canopy of defence around the faith of our cottage patriarchs.

When it is said that the attempt to reconcile the Trinity with the unity of God has been more in the way of speculation than of Scripture criticism, let it be recollected that each of the elementary propositions rested on Scripture criticism alone, and that the generalized expression of them in the proposition of the doctrine of the Trinity is not properly speculation. The object of speculation is to find out ligaments or bonds of connexion between the distinct separate truths, which bonds or ligaments Scripture has not made known to us, and it is not to be wondered at that in this particular there should be no information whatever elicited by Scripture criticism.

"In order to do justice to the Catholic system," Dr. Hill says,* "it is necessary to state the manner in which those who hold the system endeavoured to reconcile the divine unity with the subsistence of the three persons." Here I demur. To give a complete view of the literature of the question it may be necessary to state all the attempts which have been made towards this reconciliation, but it is not by a statement of these attempts that justice is done to the question itself, or to the Catholic system. Calvin in his noted deliverance of great, but I think of wise generality, made no attempt to reconcile the elementary propositions with each other, but only brought them into juxtaposition, and wove so many simple affirmations into a

* Vol. ii. p. 285.

comprehensive and complex one. This is only reassembling the elementary truths in one sentence, it is not reconciling them ; and I contend that ample justice is done to the Catholic system, if it can be shown that each of the simple propositions is based on scriptural statement, and the complex or general proposition has been rightly deduced out of them. All that follows then, I hold, is a very close treading on the margin that separates the known from the unknown, and perhaps a pressing inwards sometimes on the ulterior region. At the same time I do think the matter managed by Principal Hill with a delicacy and a generality which do credit both to his judgment and taste ; and as I particularly admire the ultimate deliverance which he has come to on the subject, we need not shrink, now that we have come so near to the end of our journey, from the same full and minute description of the remainder that we have observed along the whole of that continuous and protracted way, through which with such exemplary patience you have travelled.

BOOK III.—CHAP. X.—SECT. IV.

AMOUNT OF OUR KNOWLEDGE RESPECTING THE TRINITY.

THE PRAYER.

WE acknowledge and repent before Thee, O God, the sinfulness of our nature. Make us more deeply sensible thereof, that we may be led to prize the remedy of the gospel, and be reduced to a thankful acquiescence in its overtures of reconciliation. Do Thou manifest the truth of Thy word to our consciences, and give us not only to discern there such a picture of ourselves as may convince us of sin, but such a fulness in the offered salvation as may cause us to rejoice in the worth and sufficiency of our Saviour. Be with us now and ever.—Amen.

We cannot fail here* to remark the substantial unity of the two Established Churches of Great Britain in respect of doc-

* See vol. ii. p. 301.

trine, though not in respect of government or of form—unity, therefore, in regard to that on which the Bible has explicitly delivered itself, variety in regard to that on which the Bible has left no very distinct or authoritative statement at all. In spite, however, of this their substantial unity, I have no wish that they should ever be united, holding it wise not to attempt an incorporation which, if attempted, would be resisted, and thinking it quite possible that two Churches may be one in charity though unlike in constitution, of the same faith under different forms.

It here occurs to me to say, that I hold it a high point of Christian wisdom not to give offence by the introduction of trifling novelties into the service of a congregation, even although they should be real improvements as far as they go. The Apostle Paul I hold a perfect example of tact and delicacy in this respect, and have often admired the dexterity wherewith he applies the light of a clear and important principle to the questions of minuter casuistry. To him it was a trifle whether he ate flesh or not, but if it were to offend a weak brother he would not eat flesh while the world standeth. There was a fine combination in this—strength of conscience along with the utmost tenderness for the infirmities of the weak. It is the very combination I should like you all to realize, superiority to vulgar prejudices, but along with this the utmost indulgence, save when the higher interests of truth and godliness were at stake—a kind and considerate indulgence for vulgar feelings. The introduction of the organ into public worship I give as one example of what I mean. You may not care about it, perhaps rather like it on the whole, yet if it gave serious distress to but one of the congregation, I should hold this a paramount reason for not insisting upon it. The practice of standing at the psalms may be specified as another. I have known the utmost clamour and dissatisfaction excited on both of these occasions, and even witnessed a great parochial effervescence on the practice being abolished of reading out the line. I mention these instances merely for the sake of giving greater distinctness to the general lesson of an

enlightened forbearance with each other in the mere circumstantials of worship, in contrast to the furious intolerance and zeal which characterized and at the same time disgraced a former age.

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“We are thus brought back, after reviewing a multiplicity of opinions, to the few simple positions which constitute the whole amount of the knowledge that Scripture has given us concerning the Trinity,” &c.—Vol. ii. p. 309.

This statement of our text-book brings us to what I should call the *ne plus ultra* of our deliverances on the subject of the Trinity. And you will observe the extreme generality of the description. I should feel inclined to describe it by negatives rather than by affirmatives, denying Sabellianism on the one hand, on the Scriptural evidence of the distinction between the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; denying Tritheism on the other, on the Scriptural evidence of there being only one God, professing the utmost value for the separate propositions, and on their being formed into a compendious proposition, confessing my utter ignorance of the ligament which binds them together into one consistent and harmonious whole.

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“The second inference or advice is, that as you cannot expect to give the body of the people clear ideas of the manner in which the three persons are united, it may be better in discoursing to them to avoid any particular discussion of this subject, and to follow here, as in every other instance, the pattern of teaching set in the New Testament.”—Vol. ii. p. 312.

This is a very judicious advice, though he has not entered minutely into the reasons of it. Indeed I have nowhere met among Trinitarian writers, a formal recognition of the distinction which I have so much insisted on between the separate propositions viewed in their individuality, and the comprehensive proposition formed by the juxtaposition of them all. If it be true, even as I think it, that the moral and the practical good of the doctrine comes directly forth of the separate propositions, then there is no call, for any good purpose at least,

to deviate at all from the Scriptural exposition of the subject ; and this consideration is further enforced by what I have so often asseverated on the respective functions of the polemic theology on the one hand, and the simply didactic or hortatory on the other. I will only further observe, that there is no duplicity in this advice of the text-book. It is not telling you to receive one thing at the hall, and to go forth with an opposite thing into the pulpit ; it is only to receive one thing here and go forth with a different thing there. And that just because you should become qualified to defend the truth as well as to deliver it, just because there may be an occasional call upon you to become polemics, as well as a constant call upon you to become pastors ; and whether you come forth on the field of controversy or not, it is of importance that you, the future pastors of the Church, should be shielded against the influence of all these heresies, to which, in your more varied and extensive acquaintance with the authorship of your profession, you are greatly more exposed than any of the people who are beneath you.

“The essential points of Christian instruction, which it is the duty of the ministers of the gospel to impress upon the people, are revealed in the Scriptures in such a manner as to be in no danger of leading into the Sabellian, the Arian, or the Tritheistic scheme of the Trinity ; and therefore if we adhere, as we ought always to do, to the pure revelation of Scripture in our account of the three persons, we have no occasion to expose to the people the defects of these schemes, and we may reserve to ourselves all the speculations about the manner in which the three persons are united.”—Vol. ii. p. 313.

This is a most cheering and important truth ; and I trust you see the reason of it. We can make out no more of the Trinity than the separate and Scriptural propositions will let us, and by expounding these, you in fact furnish the people with the only materials which are available, even to the profoundest theologian. What a beautiful prospect does this open, when these matters come to be clearly understood and faithfully proceeded on. What a mighty disencumbrance to the work

of the pulpit if all the terms and technicalities of the polemic theology were at length dispensed with. What a superior effectiveness, under the blessing of God, may be anticipated from the preaching of the word, when the word itself dictated the sermon, and that without reference to the numberless perversities of sentiment which it is the office of the *theologia elenctica* to crush and to exterminate. What a blessed revolution, when this *theologia elenctica* is confined to its own place, and a pure *theologia didactica* is all in all throughout our parishes. The scholastic ought *instante* to be wholly superseded by the Scriptural in the work of the ministry ; and let us hope that by the growth of moral honesty among men, and submission to the true philosophy of theological investigation, controversies may at length disappear, and so this scholastic theology, with its services wholly uncalled for, may become a useless and a forgotten thing.

BOOK IV.

OPINIONS CONCERNING THE NATURE, THE EXTENT, AND THE APPLICATION OF THE REMEDY BROUGHT BY THE GOSPEL.

THE PRAYER.

THY mercy, O God, is in the heavens, and Thy truth reacheth to the clouds. We rejoice that in the gospel of Jesus Christ this mercy and this truth have met together. We had come within the scope of Thy threatenings. The vengeance of a broken law was upon us. Thou stoodest committed to the declarations which Thyself hadst made against the children of iniquity ; yet Thou foundest out a way in which to harmonize with the attributes of a nature that is holy and venerable, a full acceptance of the sinners who have offended Thee. Make us wise and understanding in this the way of the Lord, and give us that knowledge of Thyself and of Jesus Christ which is life everlasting. Be with us now and ever.

In the text-book, the distinction is not sufficiently adverted to between the controversial and the simply didactic theology,

although there are some most judicious and important advices in regard more especially to the proper work of the pulpit, which are evidently founded upon it. The whole plan, therefore, is more accommodated to the correction of heresies than to the immediate derivation of the truth from Scripture, a process which, if it were possible, one would like to see executed by one completely unconscious of all the human differences that had existed upon the subject. The exposition of divine truth is a work different, and differently gone about, from the exposure and the correction of human error, although you come by each of them to the establishment of the same principle at the last. Let us not be alarmed, however, as if we were again to be sickened by another round of interminable polemics. They, in the first place, are not of so revolting a character, for we will not come into contact with the jargon of the schools, or be scandalized by the daring and offensive liberties which, in the wantonness of speculation, were taken with the constitution of the Deity ; and, on the other hand, the subject of investigation lies nearer home. Instead of relating to the constitution of God, it relates to the character of man. The lights of experience and Scripture are now to be blended together, and the whole track before us now partakes more of the character of a home-walk through the recesses of our own felt and familiar nature. The depositions of Scripture criticism are responded to by the depositions of one's own consciousness, and the questions all so touch on the state and the prospects of humanity, as to give a very near and affecting interest to the whole speculation. I, on Thursday, shall explain how it is that the greater number of theological writers do not begin at the point where we now are, in their expositions of the subject-matter of Christianity, although I think it would in fact be a far more continuous transition from the Natural to the Christian theology. By commencing with the Trinity, as is very generally done, the line of continuity is broken, and a great immediate ascent made, *per saltum* as it were, to a theme the most transcendental of any in the Christian record, and which, if we prosecute too far, would land us in the most hopeless and unresolvable mys-

teries. Let me ask you, then, to feel how as if, fresh from all that natural theology had informed you of, or rather given you in the shape of obscure and uncertain intimations, you were entering your first footstep on that territory where alone relief from the distress, and satisfaction to the most urgent inquiries of nature could be found.

BOOK IV.—CHAP. I.

DISEASE FOR WHICH THE REMEDY IS PROVIDED.

THE PRAYER.

WE feel, O God, the burden of our alienation from Thyself in the sad fruit of all this ungodliness, in the perversity of our hearts, and the innumerable errors and deficiencies of our lives. We pray for a full application to our sad moral disease of the remedy of the Gospel. Give us to experience a present salvation in our being delivered from the power of sin here, as well as a future salvation in our being delivered from the punishment of sin hereafter. And grant, O God, that entering now on a life of resolute and universal holiness, we may at length become meet for the inheritance of a blissful eternity. Be with us now and ever.—Amen.

The moral disease under which we labour may be regarded as the basis of the Christian system. It is that which Christianity presupposes, which Christianity proceeds upon, and its great object, in fact, is to administer a restorative and a relief from the natural wretchedness of our state and the natural maladies of the human constitution. We hold it of prime importance that we should have deep and adequate notions of the guilt and depravity of man; for just in proportion to our sense of the virulence of the disease will be our sense of the value of the remedy, will be the value that we set both on the sacrifice that atones and on the Spirit that sanctifies. A meagre and superficial imagination of human guilt lies at the bottom of all

meagre and superficial views of Christianity. Extenuate this, and every thing else is reduced and extenuated in proportion. A slight hurt requires but the application of a slight and gentle remedy ; and, accordingly, on the system of those who look on the moral distemper of our nature as but slight, you will find, in correspondence with this, that all the peculiarities of the gospel revelation are well-nigh attenuated into nothing. Christianity, instead of being regarded as a radical cure for a mortal disease, is but regarded as a mild and gentle remedy for a slight moral ailment. When the doctrine of man's corruption is thus reduced, every thing else is enfeebled and made slender in the same ratio, and either the blood of a satisfying propitiation to wash away our guilt, or a regenerating spirit to create the clean heart and make it all over again, are felt to be alike uncalled for.

It serves to mark a connexion between the Natural and the Christian theology, and to evince how continuous the transition is from the one to the other, when we observe that the doctrine which stands at the commencement of the Christian, is strongly impressed upon us even by the feebler lights of the natural theology. There is a conscience within every breast, there is the sense of a moral and a righteous Governor who planted it there. There is a consciousness of deficiency from that pure and perfect virtue which is required by His law, and so a consciousness of sin. The inward conviction of depravity, the agonies of remorse, the forebodings of vengeance, these do not need to be put into us by a revelation from heaven, they are feelings which man has already, and wherewith he might meet the disclosures of revelation. They were not unknown in ages of darkest heathenism, and still are to be met with by the bearers of the gospel among the savages of far distant lands. In short, there is a universal theology of nature which has familiarized all men to the fearful sense of guilt and of danger ; and instead of this feeling having to be awakened by Christianity, it forms one of the prior and ready-made securities for Christianity obtaining an earnest hearing from men, that it comes charged with overtures by which to appease the

feeling which before its appearance in the world had often been painfully awakened in the human bosom.

It is here altogether worthy of being remarked, that though previously informed by nature of our guilt, this does not supersede the necessity for the same information being further given us by Christianity. It may both be true that by the light of nature alone we may arrive at a certain sense and a certain sensibility towards sin, and yet that when further told of it by Christianity the sense and the sensibility may become tenfold more alive than before. This corresponds with the phenomena of human consciences in ordinary life. Take the case of a man hurrying on to some guilty indulgence, and perhaps entered upon a course of it. His conscience is far from being entirely asleep in insensibility: it gives him occasional disturbance—it embitters the course of pleasure upon which he is embarked. He is not at ease, pursued by a sense of worthlessness, which, however, may not be nearly adequate to the enormity of those offences into which he is fallen. There is a film of shade and of dimness between the eye of his conscience and the wickedness it is employed in contemplating, in virtue of which, though he does apprehend the guilt of his own misconduct, he apprehends it but dully and hazily, carrying along with him, therefore, but a languid sense of his own worthlessness, and a sense of it that easily glides away from his heart when the fascinations of sin have entered it, and which can at all times be overborne amid the impetuosity and uproar of those guilty passions that war against the soul.

Now, suppose in this state a discovery made of all this turpitude to others, that human tongues begin to reproach and human eyes to flash upon him, or let us suppose either the calm remonstrance of a friend, or the indignant remonstrance of the person he has deceived and injured, to be sounded in his ear. This is the superaddition of an external testimony to that of his own conscience respecting his guilt; and what I say is, that upon this taking place, conscience becomes tenfold more awake and alive than before. As if by the falling of scales from its eyes, it now sees most vividly what before it saw

but obscurely. The telling from without is responded to by a loud and fearful echo from within. The light brought to it, although *ab extra*, now penetrates his bosom, and there lightens up all the recesses where there was a heavy though not a total darkness before. What the man then saw but faintly and imperfectly, he now sees in fierce and fearful lustre. The light that now gleams upon him from without has, as if by sympathetic touch, illumed the candle of his own conscience within, and such is the power of mere external testimony, that it not merely overwhelms this victim of depravity with shame, but with all the agonies and horrors of self-condemnation before unfelt.

This remarkable power of external testimony to kindle a respondent light within the man's own breast has not been enough adverted to. We feel persuaded that much of the operation and effect of the internal evidence for the truth of Christianity lies in this principle. It is a principle verified to the full in common authorship. How is it that a moral writer, whether by dissertation or even by fictitious history, recommends his own wisdom and discernment to the admiration of his readers, just by holding up to them a mirror of their own minds? He tells them that which they never adverted to before, yet of which on the moment of its being told, they instantly recognise the truth and justice. He can charm from long oblivion a thousand of their own experiences which rise up as witnesses for what he says of some peculiarity in the state and tendency of their own affections, or in the constitution of their moral nature. We know that an external testimony can bring to recollection many a historical event in one's outward life which for years had lain in profoundest forgetfulness; and so external testimony can bring to recollection these historical events in one's inward life, which form, in fact, the materials for the knowledge of human nature. Thus it is that when a man of wisdom and profound discernment tells of human nature and its peculiarities, there is many a reader or hearer who never could have made the observation himself, but who, on the moment of its being made, instantly recognises it, and does

homage to the truth. It is remarkable that so many forgotten things should be laid up in the dormitories of one's own bosom, and would lie there for ever, unless awakened into life and consciousness by a voice from without. This is a profound part of our nature, but a part which belongs to every man, and makes him a subject for that manifestation which the Bible calls the manifestation of the truth unto the conscience. Things are said to him from without, and he by means of an independent faculty or knowledge from within assents to the truth of them. How can this be, if they are novelties, and he appears only to have heard them for the first time? It is truly for the reason which I now specify. The external voice has awakened many a dormant recollection, which had long escaped his notice, and would have remained in oblivion for ever; and these recollections thus made alive are the living witnesses within for the correctness of these intimations, which are now brought to him from without. The voice of another, whether it comes to him by hearing or by authorship, has an echo in his own bosom, and that an echo which, but for this voice from without, would never have been awakened.

You will now see the importance of it to us that human guilt, though deposed to originally by nature, should be proclaimed as it is by revelation. Nature at first deposes but in part, and without adequate sense or sensibility, to its own guiltiness, just like the man who indulging in wickedness has a conscience that tells him of the evil, but tells him faintly and feebly, till, when further told of it by others, the same conscience records, and that with powerful voice, the remonstrance which then is sounding in his ears. Now this, and this precisely, is what the Scripture doctrine of man's depravity does for the man who reads, and reads intelligently, in his Bible. It convinces him of sin, a conviction, however, you will observe, not resting exclusively on the faith we have in the outer testimony of Scripture, but a conviction that he originally had in his own mind, though but faintly and feebly, before the testimony of Scripture had any effect upon him, and a conviction still flowing from a source within himself, though opened by

external revelation, by that hammer of the word of God which breaketh the rock in pieces.

If I have succeeded in making myself intelligible on this important matter, you will perceive how it is that the doctrine of man's moral depravation is, in fact, shared between the theology of conscience and the theology of Scripture, and how it is just the very truth which occupies the transition space that lies between them. This, then, I would seize upon as the proper outset doctrine on the moment of your entering into the subject-matter of Christianity; and you will perceive, I trust, how by means of it a sort of bridgeway is thrown across the gulf of separation between the natural and the Christian theology.

BOOK IV.—CHAP. II.

OPINIONS CONCERNING THE NATURE OF THE REMEDY.

THE PRAYER.

MAY Thy blessing, O Lord, rest on all our attempts to penetrate the meaning of the Scriptures, and to know the mind of the Spirit, as it is delivered there. Give us thereby to become wise unto salvation. May sin, both in its guilt and in its pollution, be effectually done away by the all-sovereign remedy revealed to us in the gospel; and grant, O Lord, that, convinced of the depth and the virulence of that moral disease under which we labour, we may be reduced to a thankful acquiescence in the overtures of the New Testament. Be with us now and ever.—Amen.

We are now at a very important transition in the science of theology. We have considered the great moral disease which pervades, and that universally, the families of earth, and we now proceed to consider the remedy held forth to us from heaven. You are aware of the distinction between the judicial and the personal in the disease, and it is of the utmost importance for you to understand that there is a distinction in the remedy precisely the counterpart of this. Christianity, wherever it takes effect, reverses both the personal and the judicial state of man; and whereas by nature there is both a condemna-

tion under which we lie, and a corruption by which we are tainted, by the gospel there is, on the one hand, a free acquittal, or rather justification for all who embrace it, and on the other, there is a transformation of character—a change from sin to righteousness—insomuch that the real disciples of the Saviour are delivered, not only from the guilt of moral evil, but are also delivered from its power.

It is of the more importance your attention being fastened on these two individual parts of the remedy, and your ever insisting on the second to be as indispensable as the first, that on this subject there is a deep and an inveterate delusion in the popular understanding. I could almost affirm of the majority of our people, that they look on Christianity far more as a dispensation of pardon than as a dispensation the aim and object of which is to moralize the character of men—that the relief which it principally offers is a relief from the punishment of sin, and not a relief from the bondage of sin itself. What, in fact, they chiefly regard in it is the indemnity which it offers against the pains and penalties of the broken law, and not the reinstatement which it proposes to effect of the ascendancy of that law over the heart and the history of man. In other words, it is but a salvation addressed to the sentient or the animal part of our nature that they at all care for, or a deliverance from those physical sufferings inflicted on the disobedient by the hands of an angry and avenging God. The salvation in Christianity addressed to the moral part of our nature is what I am afraid they have but low and languid conceptions of; and it will be your part to correct this sordid imagination, and train them to worthier and more exalted views of that economy, the object of which is not merely to reconcile, but to regenerate—not merely to avert from men the wrath of an offended God, but to restore them to His image, and to all those moral graces and perfections by which His nature is irradiated. The truth is, that a judicial deliverance, so far from being the ultimate or highest part of the Christian salvation, stands to the personal deliverance only in the relation of means to an end. Justification is, as it were, the starting-

post of the Christian life, and sanctification is the landing-place. The one is but instrumental or introductory to the other ; and if the first effect of Christ's death is to wash us from our guilt, the great and terminating effect of it is, that He might purify us to Himself, a peculiar people, and make us zealous of good works.

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These are the two great doctrines, I had almost said divisions, of Christianity. By the one we are informed what that is which constitutes our title to heaven, by the other what that is which constitutes our preparation for it. Ere we have part in that glorious inheritance, we must not only be made meet in law, but we must also be made meet in person and character ; and I hope to make it clear that, by giving to the righteousness of Christ the whole glory of the first of these objects, we take a most effectual method of speeding onward the second of them, which is to perfect our own personal righteousness.

It will be your part to vindicate the truth as it is in Jesus from the aspersions which have been so plentifully cast upon it, and for this purpose to put the holiness of the gospel on the front and foreground of all your ministrations. You will have more to do than perhaps you are aware of in tracking through all its disguises that subtle Antinomianism which, though seldom avowed, has in effect insinuated itself into every popular creed of Christendom. You must expound the salvation of the gospel as being a moral salvation ; and protest on every occasion, in the hearing of your people, that unless they are turning from sin to righteousness, their salvation has not yet begun, nor have the lessons of the Christian faith taken any effect upon them.

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I may here remark, that Scripture is more exclusively the source of our information in regard to the remedy than in regard to the disease. For the latter we have the light of consciousness as well as the light of revelation. In speaking of man's moral depravation, the Bible speaks of what may be termed an earthly thing, or a thing which, having its place on

earth, is a subject of man's direct and personal observation. In speaking, again, of God's method by which He proposes to reconcile and regenerate the world, the Bible speaks of that which may more properly and exclusively be termed a heavenly thing. It is a thing which has its place in heaven. It is a matter which appertains to the jurisprudence of God. In affirming the delinquency of the human character, we affirm that which has its proof and its verification within the precincts of a man's own bosom; in affirming the scheme of our redemption, we affirm that which was devised in the counsels of the upper sanctuary. For the one there is a confirmation and a response in human experience; of the other, information had to be brought to us from a place which the experience of man does not reach. We are therefore more exclusively dependent on the informations of Scripture for the one doctrine than the other—revelation being our sole guide and our sole authority on this great question.

I would furthermore observe, that there is a difference of effect in the preaching of these two doctrines which, I think, admits of being explained. An able and effective exposition of the disease is more interesting to the general public; an exposition of the remedy, though alike able and effective, is only more interesting to those who are in earnest about their salvation. The following I hold to be an explanation of this phenomenon: In preaching on the disease, you appeal to man's own consciousness of his own moral nature; you enter into the recesses of his heart, and may hold out a vivid portraiture of the hidden man who thinks and feels and purposes there. The testimony which comes from without is met by a reflex consenting testimony from within. Man is always interested when there is held out to him, as in a mirror, a faithful representation of himself. For this purpose it is not necessary that he should come under the power of the lessons wherewith he is plied. It is enough if he but recognise the justice of them. He will then feel the same sort of dramatic interest which is felt in witnessing any vivid exhibition of life or manners. Whether or not he comes under the power of what is said, if

there be in his bosom but a responsive echo to its truth, man must and ever will feel interested. In this way the exposure of the man's ungodliness may not only be listened to with toleration, but be admired and acquiesced in by thousands who are neither humbled nor alarmed because of it.

Now, you are very generally abandoned by the sympathy of these hearers, when you pass from an exposition of the disease to an exposition of the remedy. It comes to be very different when you speak about matters the knowledge of which is brought from afar, instead of speaking about matters which lie within the homestead of man's own familiar recollections. And accordingly the very hearers who hung with intense interest when told graphically and experimentally of the disease, feel the insipidity of the theme when you proceed to tell them of the remedy, to expound the efficacy of Christ's atonement, or the validity of His substituted righteousness. The truth is, they take no personal, they take only a speculative or literary interest in the question at all. This interest is upholden when engaged in those topics which admit a vivid delineation of our own felt and familiar humanity, but it takes flight when the question relates to a subject so remote from any experience of ours as the jurisdiction of heaven, and the manner in which redress and reparation have been made for its outraged dignity.

And it is only with those few who have been practically awakened into a sense of their own deep and urgent concern in these things—with those whose fears have been awakened, and who are visited by the conviction of a present guilt and a coming judgment—with those who, affected by the realities of the question, make their reconciliation with God the object of their resolute inquiry—it is only with those, I say, that you find the welcome of a willing and an obedient ear when you tell that to them a Saviour has been born.

BOOK IV.—CHAP. II.—SECT. I.

SOCINIANISM.

THE PRAYER.

WE would bless Thy name, O God, because it is holy. Yet Thine is a holiness tempered with mercy, and which, though utterly repugnant to sin, is not inconsistent with the utmost compassion and love to the sinner. We rejoice that in the scheme of our redemption these elements which appear to be so discordant have been completely harmonized—that there truth and mercy have met together—that there righteousness and peace have entered into fellowship—and that in virtue of the decease accomplished at Jerusalem, Thou canst at once be a just God and a Saviour.

“The fundamental principle of the Socinian system is this: Pure goodness, or a desire to communicate happiness, is conceived by the Socinians to constitute the whole character of the Deity,” &c.—Vol. ii. pp. 362, 363.

This I hold to be a very prevalent illusion, and which serves to explain much of what is meagre and unsound in theology. It is not confined to Socinians alone; we meet with it, though chiefly among educated people of orthodox denominations at least, whatever their leanings and principles may be. It forms, I think, the great deficiency in our systems of natural theism. Butler is free from it; and by a single remark, I think, in one of his footnotes, he clears himself effectually from all participation in the error to which I am now adverting, and which consists in merging all the moral attributes of the Divinity into one, that one being benevolence. Butler says somewhere that we have no reason to presume that the production of happiness was the sole end of God in the creation—that He may have had other and even more paramount objects in view, and he instances the vindication and the glory of moral righteousness. I should say it was a great defect of Paley’s *Natural Theology* that he makes so little account of those perfections in God to which more peculiarly belong the characteristic of sacredness.

He, too, falls very much into the way of amalgamating all the attributes of the Godhead into a placid undistinguishing tenderness, ascribing to Him the fondness rather than the authority of a parent, and obliterating all those characteristics which belong to Him as a sovereign, a lawgiver, and a judge. God's intolerance for sin as sin is overlooked in this way of regarding Him ; and I do hold this to be at the bottom not of Socinianism alone, but of much of the false and therefore fatal security that prevails in the world.

I have already remarked, that to this laxity of principle in theological science there is a corresponding laxity in moral or ethical science. In our abstract systems of moral philosophy there are some who have attempted to resolve the virtuousness of all rectitude whatever into benevolence, and so to make the obligation and the morality of justice and truth and purity lie altogether in their subserviency to the good or happiness of society. Our soundest philosophers upon this subject, however, disclaim this analysis, and affirm an independent character of virtuousness in these qualities, which may therefore be held the orthodox system of morals. I hold it altogether worthy of your observation, that what the advocates of an unsound ethical theory affirm of certain virtues in the abstract when running and resolving them all into benevolence, the advocates of an unsound theology on the other affirm of Him who is the concrete, if I may so speak, and exemplar of all the virtues, affirming of God that the all-engrossing morality of His nature is benevolence, and that His justice and truth and holiness are but the ministers of this perfection ; so that, according to their estimation, in the great act of forgiveness which has been extended to a rebellious world, there needed no homage to these inferior or subsidiary qualities of His nature, seeing that by this great act He has demonstrated the supremacy of His goodness, that great master virtue which subordinates all the rest, and comprehends all the rest.

You will observe that this Socinian view of the Deity reposes on a principle disowned by a vast majority, and those, too, of highest name in ethical science. But it is not primarily or

principally from them that we derive our assurance as to the great doctrine of the atonement. All the positive evidence and all the positive information we have on this subject are furnished by Scripture; and we employ the authority of the ethical principle not to establish the doctrine of God, but to nullify the objections which men have raised against it. We do not regard the ethical principle as a prop to the theological doctrine, but the theological doctrine rather as a confirmation and a testimony to the soundness of the ethical principle. We hold it as a very striking expression of the high and independent prerogatives which belong to truth and justice, that when these attributes in the Divinity were staked to the infliction of those penalties which had been annexed to disobedience, it was not by a simple and unconditional act of goodness that the outrage was repaired. A propitiation had to be rendered. The penalties were not cancelled;—they were only transferred from the head of the offenders to the head of their substitute; and in the agonies and cries and symptoms of deep endurance on the part of this mighty and mysterious sufferer, do we both behold an homage to truth and justice and holiness in themselves, and, as virtues residing in the character of God, do we behold in this solemn transaction of our atonement the lustre poured over them of an awful vindication.

But our chief purpose in these observations is not to adduce this doctrine as evidence in behalf of any ethical system. If such a system be at all well founded, it must be accordant with that practical sense of morality which is universal among men, and which is anterior to the formation of any philosophic theory. And accordingly the impression on every unsophisticated conscience is, that mere benevolence does not comprehend the sum and the substance of all virtue—that truth and justice have at least a co-ordinate rank with it—that there is an authority, a rightfulness in these great principles which it were anarchy to violate—and that if as existing in God there is not in every act of the Divine administration a full recognition and homage rendered to them, then the character of the Godhead suffers mutilation. In these circumstances, an un-

conditional act of mercy could not have appeased the fears of guilt. There would have been the misgivings of conscience in the face of it. Men would not have felt at ease while the question of God's truth and justice and holiness were left undispensed of. It is the manifest union of truth and mercy in the gospel which gives to the message, not of simple but of propitiated pardon, its hold and its charm over the moral nature of man. He sees in the redemption of the New Testament a halo of all the attributes, and that there and there alone the benevolence of God shines forth upon the guilty world without one shade of slightest obscuration on its august and inviolable sacredness.

The placability of God is often affirmed in Scripture, and that without any reference to the work of a mediator. The one is not always spoken of in conjunction with the other; but if both the one and the other are asserted in the Bible, at however great a distance from each other, though not always placed in juxtaposition, and within the limits of the same verse or sentence, then both must be sustained as true—that is, that God is merciful, and yet that that mercy finds its way to our guilty world only through the channel of the mediatorship of Christ. Nor is the first of these positions at all shaken or impaired in its credit and certainty by the second of them. Although the mercy of God reaches the transgressors of His law only through the merits and mediation of His Son, there is nothing in this which at all deducts from the strength of this attribute. It was not the redemption by Christ which originated the mercy of God, but it was the mercy of God which originated the scheme of our redemption. He so loved the world as to send His only begotten Son into it; and herein is love, that He sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. It is of the utmost importance that you give a primary, a presiding place to the kindness of God the Father in the great work of redemption. You are not to represent Him as devoid of all movement or affection of good-will to mankind till propitiated and made placable, as it were, by the sacrifice of His Son upon the cross. You must ever remember to impress it upon your people that the tender

mercy of God to His strayed children lay at the bottom of the whole of this marvellous dispensation—that He felt, towards them all the longings of a bereaved parent—that the mode of recovery was a method of His own devising, and instituted by Him for the purpose of finding a way by which He might reach the guilty, and put forth that mercy upon them which is the darling attribute of His nature. And because it had to devise such a way, so far on this account from its being a mercy abridged and obliterated, it was mercy in its highest possible exhibition, because a mercy that had to struggle, as it were, against the necessities of a high and holy administration—a mercy that had to scale the barrier which the truth and justice and sacredness of the divinity placed in its way—a mercy by which, rather than destroy our world, He spared not His only beloved Son; and now that the wall of separation has been taken down by Him who died the just for the unjust, a mercy is held forth to the acceptance of all, which, rejoicing in its own exuberance, goes abroad over the face of the world, and plies with its overtures of welcome and good-will all the individuals of all its families.

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“In the opinion of the usefulness of Christianity all who receive it as a divine revelation readily agree. But the Socinians, as if desirous to atone, by this branch of their encomium on Christianity, for the dishonour which other parts of their system are conceived to do to that religion, go far beyond other Christians in magnifying the importance of the gospel as a method of instruction. They represent its precepts as not only simple, clear, and authoritative, but as inculcating virtues which are neither explicitly taught in the law of Moses, nor deducible from any of its principles; and they allow the messenger of the grace of God all the honour which can accrue to his character and to his religion from the essential superiority of his precepts.”—Vol. ii. pp. 366, 367.

There occurs here a very curious discrepancy in the system of the Socinians. On the first aspect of their doctrine one would say of it that it is characterized by the magnifying of

reason above revelation. It is because certain Scripture positions, when viewed literally and just as they stand, are so offensive to the natural understanding, that they would have them qualified and moulded into a conformity with our own conceptions of what is right and reasonable. This is the principle of all those liberties which they have practised on the plain and obvious declarations of the Bible ; and yet when their argument requires that they should magnify the errand on which the Saviour came, even though the single purpose of that errand was the instruction of the world, they speak in such terms of our utter dependence on the informations of the upper sanctuary as if revelation did all, and it were utterly incompetent for reason to do anything. You know the respective functions of the two. It is, in the first instance, the part of reason to sit as supreme arbiter on the evidences of a professed message from heaven to earth ; it is, in the second instance, the part of reason to ascertain the sense of this alleged revelation, but that you will remember on the same principles of grammar and criticism which determine the sense of any ordinary author. After this, reason resigns her office, but not till she has pronounced it to be most reasonable that after the bearer of an alleged communication from heaven has produced the satisfying credentials of His mission, nothing remains for it but the unqualified submission of our faith to all the doctrine and all the information wherewith he is charged.

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We think Dr. Priestley has shown the want of a sound philosophic spirit in having dogmatized so confidently on his particular side of the question in regard to the constitution of the soul ;* but, on the other hand, we hold that the reasoning on the opposite side has been a great deal too confident also. With me the deciding authority for the separate existence of the soul is the authority of Scripture, as gathered from the following and other like passages :—" This day thou shalt be with me in paradise ;" " God is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, though not the God of the dead but of the living ;" " Better

* Hill, vol. ii. pp. 368, 369.

to be absent from the body and present with the Lord." On these plain testimonies I hold the substantive existence of the soul, apart from the materialism by which it is now encompassed, to be a stable category of the faith; but I confess that the depositions of Scripture far outweigh, to my apprehension, all the demonstrations of pneumatology on this subject. There was a style of reasoning very prevalent at the beginning and middle of the last century—and nothing astonishes me more in the history of philosophy than that Butler and Brown should have given in to it—by which the natural argument for the immortality of the soul is grounded on its alleged immateriality, and then this immateriality made to rest not on substantive proofs, but on the subtlety of such distinctions and such definitions as I am not able to comprehend. I see nothing contradictory or absurd in the assertion, that on matter, or the combinations of matter, it is in the power of the Almighty to graft the capacities of thought and feeling. I am far from saying that He has done so. The Scripture tells me otherwise. It has made the discovery of an immaterial principle, to which reason was altogether incompetent. As far as I am able to penetrate into this question, when viewed merely as a question of metaphysics, and without regard being had to the authority of revelation, I do not think that philosophers have clearly made out a connexion between the soul's immateriality and its immortality, or clearly made out the position of its immateriality at all. I am sure you will find that part of Butler which treats of this argument the least satisfactory of all in his masterly volume on the analogy of natural and revealed religion; and really when Dr. Brown speaks of the soul being immaterial, else it would be divisible—and so we might speak of half a joy, the third part of a feeling of resentment, and resolve each emotion into fractions or segments—I must confess that he is beyond the sympathy of my understanding altogether. I dispute not that there is a strength of natural argument for the immortality of the soul, but I believe that it does not rest on the immaterial nature of it. The most powerful argument is the moral one grounded on the consideration of God as the Judge and the

Governor of the world, coupled with the consideration, that both between man and man, and between man and his God, there is an infinity of unresolved questions—questions of justice we mean, as when one injures and oppresses another, or as when all, without exception, have incurred the guilt of defect and delinquency towards the Creator who gave them birth. There is a foreboding of natural conscience on the subject of these questions; and we cannot resist the impression and the dread of a day of account, to which, as they are unsettled here, they one and all of them will be postponed, that the innocent may meet with their redress, and the guilty with the retribution which is due to them. This argument is the first in strength for the immortality of the soul; and the second I hold to be grounded on the largeness of the desires and capacities of man—a largeness which nothing here can satiate, and which can only be met, therefore, by such counterpart objects as an immortality might furnish. After having proposed these two arguments, nature, I think, has exhausted her strength upon this question, and all which has been drawn by philosophers from the consideration of the physics of the mind, serves, in my apprehension, not to advance, but to enfeeble the cause.

Those Socinians who hold immortality to be natural to the soul, at the same time affirm that it sleeps between death and the resurrection. It is altogether a remarkable feature in Socinianism, that while it proceeds throughout on the competency of reason to judge of revelation, and even to qualify its declarations and its doctrines at pleasure, there are certain respects in which it admits and zealously asserts an incompetency in this faculty, far greater than is assigned to it by the generality of moralists and theologians. We have stated one example of this in their contending that all religion among men has its source in revelation, thus giving an enhanced importance to our Saviour's errand of instruction; and in like manner they deny the capacity of reason to discover the immortality of the soul, and thereby give an enhanced importance to the proclamation made in the gospel of life and immortality, and more especially to the fact of the resurrection, as being at once the evidence

and the pledge of this high destination to us all. They want to make it out, that apart altogether from the objects wherewith the mission of our Saviour is commonly associated, such as the atonement for sin and the fulfilment of a perfect righteousness, which man is invited to make use of as the plea for his acceptance with God, and the work of obedience by which he obtained, as a reward, the dispensation of the Spirit whereby to renew and to sanctify men—they want to make it out, that, apart from these objects, there are others of high enough importance for conferring a dignity and an interest on the undertaking of Jesus Christ. Enough, they think, that He made morality the subject of clearer statements and more impressive sanctions than before. Enough that He exemplified what He taught, and thus favoured the world, not with a code of virtue, but with a living picture and representation of it. Enough, more especially, that He poured such a flood of evidence on the great doctrine of man's immortality, and more particularly by His own resurrection from the grave, coupled with the announcement that it was but a sample and a prototype of the general resurrection. Now certain it is that He did accomplish all these objects; and we must not in the spirit of opposition to Socinianism, overlook the value of them. He did all these things, though we differ from the Socinians, in thinking that He also did a great deal more. Let us not, however, be insensible to the exceeding worth of those services which the Socinians ascribe to Him, or expend, what controversialists are very apt to do, all our zeal on the defence of that in which we are resisted or assailed by our antagonists. Let us frankly admit the preciousness of those things, too, which they allow that He performed, even though, to the disparagement of what we hold to be orthodoxy, they will contend that He performed no more. More particularly we have every disposition to go along with the Socinians in all which they allege of our Saviour's resurrection as a far more effective evidence than any which nature can supply for the immortal capacities of our species. We cannot imagine a greater contrast, in point of real strength and effectiveness of argument, between the airy

subtleties of the pneumatologists on this subject, and the exhibition of a risen Saviour holding converse with His disciples, and standing revealed to the eye of their senses as a man who was dead and is alive again.

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Perhaps from the sketch here given of Socinianism, you will be enabled to perceive the truth of our former assertion, that a slight and superficial view of the disease under which humanity labours is sure to be followed up by a proportionally slight and superficial view of the remedy applied to it. There is consistency ascribed in our text-book to their system, but it is a consistency of this sort: they extenuate one part of the doctrine of Christianity, and they extenuate, in like proportion, every other part of that doctrine. They feel not the enormous guilt of him the whole habit of whose heart and whose history is that of unconcern towards God. Besides the fundamental error of imagining that man can obliterate the guilt of his deeds simply by renouncing them, they proceed on the imagination that man has in himself a moral capacity and power of renouncing all the evil affections of nature, and transforming himself into a new creature of pure and holy and virtuous affections. The Bible tells us that God will turn away ungodliness from the hearts of those who believe; but they assume that man can himself turn it away, and that, at the simple bidding of his own will, he can at once shake himself loose from the thralldom both of condemnation and corruption, and start on that new career of progressive excellence in which he earns at length the reward of a blissful immortality. They most assuredly in this are not borne out either by Scripture or experience. There is a moral impotency in man, in virtue of which he cannot bid away his earthly affections from his heart and call on the heavenly affections to take their place, and have henceforth the ascendancy over him. The Bible represents such a transition as this to be as life from the dead, incompetent to the powers of fallen humanity, so that, after all, the amendment on which Socinians suspend their hope of forgiveness, is at best but an amendment in the decencies and the

moralities of civil or social life, in virtues which are distinct from godliness, amid which they may all life-long breathe in no other than an earthly element, and without the slightest share in that preparation for heaven which consists in cherishing the spirit and cultivating the holy affections and graces of heaven's society.

Consistency has no praise if it be a consistency of errors, a harmony arising from the adaptation of one principle which is wrong to another which is equally wrong. It may so happen that a system of false positions shall hang very well together—but with a system of truth it can never happen otherwise. In a system of falsehood one part may be well adapted to another part, while as a whole it is at variance both with Scripture and experience; but a sound and just system will not merely have internal symphonies within itself—it will bear to be confronted, *ab extra*, with the lights both of the Divine word and of human observation. We cannot now enter into a formal and elaborate defence of the system of our Church, though we believe, on the very announcement of it, it will recommend its own superiority to that of Socinians, in respect of its accordancy both with the contents of the Bible and with the characteristics of human nature. It is a system based on the entire and radical depravity of man, the essence of that depravity lying in man's natural ungodliness. It proposes the atonement of a real sacrifice made by the Son of God upon the cross, having in it the virtue of an adequate expiation for all that deep and desperate guilt wherewith humanity is chargeable. Under the solemn sanction and guarantee of this great transaction it makes the overtures of reconciliation to all; and they who are led to embrace these overtures, instead of regarding God in the light of goodness alone, behold, in the spectacle of the cross, the most impressive demonstration of His sacredness, and withal His irreconcilable antipathy to moral evil, so that while they receive the forgiveness of sin, they receive along with it a fearful sense of its enormity; and while, in looking with intelligence and faith to the great propitiation, all terror of the Godhead is charmed away from their hearts, they inevit-

ably draw from the contemplation a sentiment of deepest reverence. We further insist on the great moral charm and efficacy of this doctrine in bringing man under the dominion of other motives and other principles than before: that man, on looking at the goodwill which presided in heaven over this scheme of reconciliation, cannot look believingly thereat without the emotion in his heart of gratitude back again—that the love of God thus manifested to him calls forth a responsive love in him towards God, and that under the promptings of this mighty and all-subduing affection, he enters with alacrity on the service of his heavenly master, not in a spirit of legal constraint, but in a spirit of willing obedience. Corresponding to this change in the forensic state of man, we zealously affirm that there is a change, too, in his personal character, at once the consequence of his salvation and the test of its reality. And to make out this latter change there is an agent revealed to us from heaven, whose part it is to originate and to carry forward, and at length to complete this great moral transformation—a power whose office it is not to supersede the activities of man, but to stimulate these activities—fetched down from heaven by prayer, and evincing its descent on the suppliant not by a vision or a voice, but by filling his heart with the purposes and adorning his history with all the performances of virtue. A system therefore ours, providing at once for the unbroken dignity of the Lawgiver, and establishing the best moral securities in the heart and nature of man for the observation of the law.

BOOK IV.—CHAP. II.—SECT. II.

THE MIDDLE SYSTEM.

THE PRAYER.

WE would yield ourselves up to Thee, O God, as the duteous and devoted subjects of a rightful Sovereign. We would henceforth renounce our own will and our own way, and give ourselves wholly over to Thee, that Thou mayest rule in us by Thy Spirit, that Thou mayest rule over us by Thy law. We rejoice in the facilities of that open access which is now provided for sinners in the Gospel, and we desire that Thy goodness, as manifested there, may have the effect upon us that it had on the Christians of old—may it lead us to repentance.

The rise of the middle system I consider as a very instructive fact in the history of theological doctrine. Its advocates seem to have felt the influence of two opposite forces, one acting on each side of them. In the first place, they seem to have been impressed by the lack of evidence for Socinianism, or rather by its direct and diametrical opposition to the whole evidence of Scripture. But, in the second place, they felt the offence of the Cross; they could not brook the doctrine of the New Testament in all its fulness and all its peculiarity; and they were nauseated by the phraseology as well as by the substance of the evangelical system, and thus their anxiety to dispose of all that is pointed and special in the description of the remedy, laying it under the guise of general expressions, and so removing from their sight what is a matter of antipathy and disgust with them. They will allow that our immortality has been earned for us by the service of Christ, but they cannot brook the notion of His sacrifice. They will allow some vague conception of an interposed service of some kind or other on His part, that He is the mediator between God and man, but they feel cold to the idea of His intercession, and more especially when its efficacy is connected with the efficacy of the great atonement. They will even admit that the rewards of eternity are earned not by us, but earned by Him for us, while

they shrink from the doctrine of an imputed righteousness, and so represent the matter after all, as to make the acquisition of heaven the achievement and the remuneration of our own penitential obedience. And then the system proceeds on the native and inherent power of man both to commence and to accomplish that obedience, thus evading another of the offensive doctrines of peculiar, which is really Scriptural evangelism, even that of the agency of the Spirit, whereby man is regenerated and sanctified, and made meet for an inheritance among the choirs and companies of the celestial. It is thus that all the precision and particularity of the Gospel statements are, if I may so express it, overclouded with generality. What may be called the real and substantive material of the doctrine of the New Testament is kept out of sight, and the whole history of the intervention by Christ in behalf of a ruined world described, not in the terms of the actual steps of the process, but rather in the terms of those moral attributes on the part of God and the Redeemer, which originated the process and carried it forward to accomplishment ; and which description, I beg you to observe, would be equally applied to any other effectual process which had been instituted with the same design, for however our recovery had been accomplished, still it would have evidenced the goodwill of God who longed after it, and of Christ, the Son of God, who cheerfully undertook and succeeded in the execution of it. And this is one of the plausibilities which the advocates of the middle system can allege in its favour. They contend that they have no wish to reduce or extenuate the magnitude of the gift. Eternal life is the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord. But they also contend that the incumbent gratitude and the incumbent obedience are to be estimated by the magnitude of the gift, and not by the manner of it ; that the moral effect and importance of the doctrine do not seem to depend on the tenet of the atonement, for whether our blissful immortality may be referred in general to the service of Christ, or to that more special modification, the sacrifice of Christ, the same loyalty both of affection and allegiance is due upon our part. It is thus they flatter

themselves they might get quit of a doctrine revolting to their taste, even that of a propitiation by the blood of Jesus, and still retain all that sense of obligation towards Him which the orthodox view of His mediation is fitted to inspire. They profess that their view, expressed in terms of generality though it be, still recognises the love of God as the origin, and the love of Christ as the instrumental cause of our recovery to a state of immortal blessedness. Under their system, therefore, there may be as powerful a reciprocation of felt gratitude on the one side, to manifested goodwill upon the other—the same fellowship of confidence and regard both towards the Father and towards the Son.

Now admitting that, in point of moral effect upon us, it came to the same thing whether we regarded our salvation as due in the general to the intervention of Christ, or due in particular to that special mode of intervention, a sacrifice for sin, wherein He poured out His soul to the death for us; yet we would ask what right have we to generalize that which the Bible so expressly and authoritatively specializes. There can at the least this be alleged against the middle system, that there is in it a blinking of the testimony of Scripture, a revolt from its language and its peculiar form of representation, a disposition to veil over the very words of inspiration, and to merge into vague description the specific statements which inspired men have offered to the world. And there is one thing particularly which should put us on the defensive against such a practice, and that is, that in the Bible itself there is a virtue annexed to the words which the Holy Ghost teacheth, and a vanity to those words of man's wisdom which many incline to substitute in their place. And it further informs us of the disgust and antipathy of nature against the things which are revealed, the natural man receiving not the things of the Spirit of God. And more especially in this very doctrine, so disguised and slurred over, if I may use the expression, by this middle hypothesis, we are told that the preaching of the Cross is to them who perish foolishness, all apprising us throughout of the danger we incur by putting away from us any plain doctrine

of the Bible, and the plain and obvious meaning of those vocables in which it is conveyed to us.

But, besides this, it is not true that you preserve the moral character of the transaction entire and unbroken, though, giving up the particular mode of interposition which the orthodox contend for, you still admit that to that interposition we owe our recovery from a state of ruin to a state of everlasting blessedness. The mode, we say, is charged with principle; there is in it a moral essence which, by this generalizing process, is altogether dissipated—for you lose by it the manifestation of the divine character; you lose the demonstration, the impressive demonstration given on the Cross, of the turpitude of moral evil; you lose that aspect of blended love and holiness which shines forth in our redemption—we mean the redemption not as expressed in general terms, but the redemption as specially set forth in the peculiar doctrines of the sacrifice, and the substitution, and the propitiated pardon, and the imputed righteousness. And what we think destroys altogether the practical effect of this middle system is, that you lose by it the adaptation which there is between the view that Scripture holds forth of our recovery, and the real state of the human conscience. There is nothing in the generalized doctrine which meets the universal misgiving that is on all spirits in regard to the prerogatives of a violated law and the dignity of an insulted Lawgiver, and the homage due to those attributes of the Godhead which stand committed to the execution of sanctions most formally annexed to the Divine command, and most solemnly proclaimed. There is altogether a breach and a mutilation inflicted on the whole jurisprudence of the question, and which nothing but the atonement of the gospel can repair. It is in the reception of that doctrine alone that the sinner can repose himself securely on the mercy of God, and still preserve an undiminished respect for His sacredness. It is by it, and by it only, that the law is magnified and made honourable, that the Lawgiver retains His place on an undegraded throne, that His government is preserved from the anarchy which an act of connivance at sin would most certainly bring along with

it. And be assured that it is not as this doctrine figures in the demonstration of moralists and theologians, and exposes there the defective jurisprudence of this middle system, it is not by this triumph alone that you are to estimate the vast importance and worth of the peculiar doctrines of Christianity. It is by their adaptation, their practical adaptation, to the moral nature of man. It is by their fitness to tranquillize all the misgivings, and all the fearful suspicions of guilt and of vengeance which, in virtue of that nature, would still stand their ground against the bare and unsanctioned declaration of pardon. It is by the ready reception which is given to the tidings of forgiveness when thus guaranteed and thus guarded; and, above all, it is by the union which it establishes in human hearts, between the peace of a solid dependence on the mercy of God, and the reverence which they will still yield to the law and the Lawgiver, under the appalling demonstration held forth in the Cross of Christ of the malignity of sin, and the vindicated authority of Him who, by the economy of the gospel as well as by the economy of the law, hath made it so impressively palpable that He is a God who loveth righteousness and who hateth iniquity.

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I cannot agree with those who think that either the middle or the Socinian views afford a better field for eloquence in the exposition of them than does the Catholic. Perhaps in actual exemplification, there may have been finer and more eloquent composition on the side of the two former. But this is because in the critical and argumentative work of establishing the superiority of the Calvinistic in respect of evidence, there is no room for eloquence, and then, after it has been thus established, we are really too apt to concentrate our regards on those truths which have been controverted, or on those aspects of the truth under which it has been controverted. After having won for our doctrine the mastery which belongs to it on the field of argument, we are still very apt to propose it in the terms of argument; and thus in the direct business of enforcing it on the acceptance of our hearers, there is too much of the com-

plexion of mere argument given to our exposition of it. Controversy induces the necessity of precision—precision requires an appropriate nomenclature, a technology, the use of which is certainly adverse to the impressions of eloquence. And therefore it is that I would have you mix up as much of generality in your descriptions as the Bible warrants you to do. The error of your opponents lies in not specializing the doctrine to the extent to which it is done in the record ; let it not be your error that you speak of these special doctrines only in the terms of a rigorous, and precise, and formal controversialist, without ever describing them in those terms of comprehensive generality in which Scripture often describes them, and that in passages on which, taken exclusively, the middle system founds its partial representations, giving us the truth, but not the whole truth—giving us the doctrine in brief, without giving it in the detail. It is your part to do both ; and thus may you have all the scope for various and impressive eloquence which either Arians or Socinians have, while, in addition to this, you have the peculiar topics of orthodoxy, which supply the grandest possible conceptions, both of the dignity of the law, and the high state and sovereignty of the Lawgiver. If our system has not been impressively set forth, it is not from any incapacity in its truths, the incapacity must be wholly in its expounders ; for what truths more fitted to awaken those emotions which it is the object of all eloquence to produce than the truths involved in the doctrine of our redemption, when viewed in all its depth and all its peculiarity. One of the best examples of this which I at present recollect you will find in M'Laurin's sermon on Glorifying in the Cross of Christ.

At the same time, it must always be recollected that there is a natural offence against the peculiar doctrines of the gospel, and this is an offence which I believe no translation from a theological to a general style can of itself overcome. This I hold to be an error in Foster's celebrated Essay on the Aversion of men of taste to Evangelical Religion. He attributes too much of that aversion to an obsolete and exploded phraseology on the part of theologians, and too little of it to nature's

repugnance against the doctrine itself. The antipathy is not so much to the style as to the substance, and that substance cannot possibly be rendered in a full and adequate manner without the use of that peculiar and technical nomenclature which necessarily leads every divine who does justice to his subject into a diction that cannot, I fear, without the surrender of essential truth, be translated into the diction of classic or general literature. I know not, on the one hand, a more pleasing and satisfactory evidence of a change, a great moral and spiritual change, than when a person of cultivated taste, and who wont to nauseate the whole phraseology of evangelism—a phraseology wherewith they had been in the habit of associating all that was homely and vulgar, seeing that it is the very phraseology which, as being the vehicle of those truths by the reception of which we are saved, is alike acceptable to the Christian peasant and to the Christian peer: I say I know not a more gratifying transition than when, in virtue of a charm now felt in the substance of the truth itself, the old disgusts are all put to flight, and he who wont to confine his reading to what was eloquent in poetry and literature, can now regale himself with the pages of Owen, and Flavel, and Boston, and Alleine, and Baxter. On the other hand, it is your part, without a sacrifice of these doctrines, which are peculiar, and which are necessarily couched therefore in a peculiar technology revolting to nature, it is your part to generalize as much as the Bible does, and to take an example, in fact, from the advocates of the middle system, not grounding, as they do, the whole style of your representations on the verses where the work of redemption is spoken of generally, but without this exclusion to mix up the general with the peculiar representation, at least as much as Scripture itself does. It is thus you will achieve, in part at least, the object of Mr. Foster in the Essay now alluded to. You will intermingle the general with the peculiar; and so far as you do this, you will approximate the style of the pulpit to the style of ordinary literature.*

* See Review on Foster—Christian Instructor, 1813, p. 328, &c., or in Dr. Chalmers' Works, vol. xii. p. 221, &c.

BOOK IV.—CHAP. II.—SECT. III.

THE CATHOLIC SYSTEM.

THE PRAYER.

THOU art shrouded, O God, in mystery, but it is a mystery which respects Thine own everlasting counsels, and the concerns of Thy general and extended machinery. When, instead of attempting to comprehend the universality of Thy works and of Thy ways, we look to the part of them wherewith we individually have to do, there is no mystery, but a distinct offer of mercy to each of us, and a distinct call to repent and turn to the Lord Jesus, and be saved. May we meddle not with that which is Thine, for it is a matter too high for us. May we be wise in those revealed things which belong to us and our children.

I should like to qualify the assertion that a bare enumeration of texts will not suffice for the establishment of the doctrine in question.—Vol. ii. p. 391. It certainly will not suffice for the removal of the objections which sophistry and false criticism have raised against it. For this special service, we must meet the objections and disprove the criticism; but in far the greater number of instances, after we have done this, we have just demonstrated that the texts as they stand, and as they stand in our English translation too, must be taken in the obvious meaning that would naturally suggest itself to any man of common sense and common understanding. For the specific service of putting extinction upon a heresy, a bare enumeration of the texts will not suffice; but had the heresy never existed, this service would never have been called for, and those texts barely read out in the hearing of an inquirer do adequately and legitimately fulfil the great object of making him understand that their respective affirmations in the plain and natural sense of them are the very announcement of a God who cannot lie. And what is more, although a heresy do exist, yet in those numerous assemblages of society, and that vast majority of the population among whom the heresy is unknown, these texts do fulfil the great end which I have now

specified. I would have you to distinguish between the function of an erudite Scripture criticism as an instrument of defence, and its function as the instrument of the direct enforcement of the truth on the consciences and understandings of men. In the former capacity, it is indispensable to the Church ; in the latter, it is not so. The assertion of an opposite reading on the part of Arians and Socinians must be met by an elaborate search into the proper evidences of the question, the versions, and manuscripts, and quotations which have come down to us. The assertion of an opposite rendering on their part must be met by the authorities and reasonings of an elaborate philology. But when your object is to enforce the thus vindicated lesson on the minds of your people, it is altogether a preposterous application of Scripture criticism to lay before them the process of vindication. Had it not been for the disturbing force of heresy, you would have kept plying direct at the obvious lesson ; and now that the disturbing force is warded off, you still keep plying direct at the lesson. It is by Scripture criticism that you settle the question between you and the heretics—it is by simple quotation, and proceeding in the way of immediate application and address on the words quoted, that you fulfil the great work of the ministry between you and your people. And so it was a signal mistake on the part of Michaelis, that to be qualified for the office of the Christian teacher even of a rustic congregation, it was quite indispensable that he should be versant not in Greek and Hebrew only, but in Syriac and Arabic, and be besides able to point out all the Rabbinisms of Scripture. We trust that this lore will increase and be perpetuated in our Church, that the battles of the faith may at all times be successfully fought, and that we might never labour under the want of championship, or of equipment for such a warfare ; but let us distinguish the things which differ, and while we make due acknowledgment to the worth of sacred learning, let us at the same time be very sure that it is just an enumeration of Scripture verses, and then, without criticism at all, a direct enforcement of them, which has impressed, and most legitimately impressed, all that is just, and good, and

practical in our religion on the general mind of Christendom. This is not enough to silence the controvertists, but it is enough for all the purposes of a direct impression on every honest and unsophisticated inquirer.

I think that Dr. Hill lays too great an onus here on the defenders of the Catholic doctrine. He holds it necessary that they should prove the doctrine not to be irrational and unjust, which is tantamount to the positive vindication of its rationality and justice. Now, in order to put any doctrine into a capacity for being established by Scripture, I conceive it enough to prove not affirmatively that it is just and rational, but that for aught we know it may be just and rational. It were well if this part of the logic of theology were better understood and better observed in theological discussion. I am sure the transgression of it has led to a great deal of incompetent reasoning. When we are told of any doctrine that we must prove it first agreeable to reason, then to Scripture; if we mean more by the former than for aught we know it may not be unreasonable, then are we making Scripture wait ere we give admission to any of its doctrines till reason has first pronounced upon them. Unless this matter be distinctly understood, then Scripture is deprived of all those prerogatives which belong to an independent authority, and is degraded into the state of a witness whose averments must not be credited, unless another witness be called in, and depone by his averments to the truth of them. Now, the one witness may be conceived to know what the other is altogether ignorant of, and therefore I say if any faith is to be placed in the integrity of the former, though it cannot in the circumstances be corroborated by the testimony of the latter at all, then we should allow the question to be decided on his solitary evidence. It is enough if the one witness do not contradict the other. We should not require of the second that he should know of a matter to which the testimony of the first refers, and then superadd his consenting evidence to that which has gone before it. It is enough, though the second say, I know nothing of the matter; I can neither speak to the truth of it, nor yet to its contrary;—this

is enough, I say, for warranting our implicit confidence on the single and unsupported evidence of the first witness. Now Scripture may be the first witness, and reason the second. It is well when they both consent to one and the same positive affirmation. But it may be, and often is, an affirmation which Scripture alone depones to, and which is utterly beyond the province of reason either to confirm or to deny. She may be able to say nothing for, and just as little able to say any thing against it; in which case it is quite competent for her to say, that for aught she knows it may be just as Scripture describes; or, in other words, we are not to hold Scripture in abeyance till reason has decided in her favour; it is enough that it be a subject on which reason is altogether silent, not a subject on which reason pronounces that it is true; or to repeat it in the terms wherewith I set out, a subject on which reason says, that for aught she knows it may be true, or that for aught we know it may not be contrary to reason.

BOOK IV.—CHAP. III.

DOCTRINE OF THE ATONEMENT.

THE PRAYER.

WE are unable, O God, to comprehend the whole scope and tendency of Thy universal government; but, blessed be Thy name, Thou hast furnished us with clear and distinct and authoritative information in regard to the individual part we ourselves have to take, and the individual prospect that is before us. We have truly nothing to complain of. Thou callest us to repentance. Thou swearest by Thyself that Thou hast no pleasure in our death. Thou hast provided a sure way of access to the throne that is above us, and to the blissful immortality that is before us. May we comply with the overtures of Thy gospel, and from this time forward embark in the faith of Christ on that way of progressive holiness which leads to heaven.

We now enter on the Scripture proofs for the establishment of the doctrine which ought to be regarded as the keystone of

the Christian system. It is this doctrine which constitutes Christianity the religion of sinners ; and besides the way in which it pervades and is interwoven with the whole texture of holy writ, its capital importance as an article of faith is made the subject of many a distinct and specific testimony, as when Paul professes among his converts that he was determined to know nothing save Jesus Christ and Him crucified. I hold the reception of this doctrine to be the turning-point of the sinner's salvation. Anterior to this he is either indifferent to the question of his acceptance with God, or, if he entertain it in good earnest, and have a conscience at all enlightened as to the magnitude of his guilt and the high prerogatives of the law which he has violated, he is oppressed by a spirit of bondage, and maintains a fearful distance from the God whom he has offended, in the remorse of a present guilt, and the dread anticipation of a future vengeance. It is by the charm and the efficacy which lie in the accepted tidings of remission through the blood of an atonement that this burden is lifted away from his heart ; and he can now look upon a God as inflexible in truth and awful in His justice as ever ; yet, with those already discharged and manifested in the great act of propitiation, he can lay hold, without misgivings from any part of his moral nature, on the offered mercy of the gospel. On this single change lies suspended that greatest of all personal revolutions. He is translated into a new moral existence. The God whom he formerly was afraid of, now trusted and loved, becomes the master not of his constrained, but of his willing obedience. The change spoken of in the New Testament from the spirit of bondage to the spirit of adoption, instead of being only read of by him as some mysterious thing in which he has no share, is now realized in his personal experience. He walks at liberty, and with the emancipated powers of a new-born creature, he runs with alacrity and delight in the way of new obedience.

"The first thing necessary for those who defend the Catholic opinion respecting the gospel remedy is to shew that it may be stated in such a manner as not to appear irrational or unjust."—Vol. ii. p. 393.

To revert to the principle and practice of some theologians who think it necessary to shew, *a priori*, of every doctrine that it is reasonable, ere they will give any place or credit to the testimonies of Scripture on the subject, I contend that no absolute shewing of this kind is requisite. It is enough if we can simply shew, not that there are ways, but that there may be ways in which the doctrine at issue is reasonable. To undertake the proof of any position being reasonable, is surely proceeding on the competency of reason to judge of the merits of that position. Now we contend that there are a thousand positions of which reason can affirm neither one thing nor another, and respecting which, then, one can neither say that it is agreeable to reason nor contrary thereto. Yet all such positions may be substantiated and made sure on the authority of Scripture; and if this principle were sufficiently understood and acted on, many is the fallacious argumentation that would be superseded and cut short by it. Infidels and demi-infidels have objected, for example, to the doctrine of the efficacy of prayer, and hold it an unreasonable doctrine in the face of that unvarying consistency which all nature exhibits to the notice of observers. Some of you may recollect the one way in which I contended that a reconciliation could be effected; and there is more than one way, but it is not necessary on our side of the argument to make absolute demonstration either of one way or another. It is enough for our purpose if, for aught we know, some of these ways may be the actual one, to clear out, as it were, an open space for the affirmations of Scripture on the subject, and, on the strength of those affirmations, to hold both by the doctrine of the efficacy of prayer and of a special providence.

I have formerly stated to you what I conceived to be the precise use of a hypothesis in theology. It may not succeed in making positive establishment of its truth, but it may have rendered a great service to the cause notwithstanding, simply by its enemies not being able to make a positive establishment of its falsehood. Conceive this hypothesis to quadrature with the doctrine in Scripture, then the *onus* of overturning the

hypothesis lies on the antagonists of the doctrine, ere they can set it aside on the score of unreasonableness. In proportion to the likelihood or plausibility of the hypothesis will the task of overturning it be the more difficult ; and therefore, though it may lend no affirmative force to a doctrine already asserted in Scripture, yet till itself be disproved, it stands an unremoved obstacle in the way of all hostile assaults upon the doctrine. It is precisely thus I would estimate the logical value of the *a priori* reasonings in which theologians have indulged on the subject of the atonement. For example, it is argued that the honour of God's law must be vindicated by such a transaction. Not unlikely, I would say, beforehand. Or that it is indispensable to the reconciliation of God's truth and justice with the exercise of mercy to the sinful. It may be so, I would readily answer, and would call on an objector to our express Bible testimonies in favour of the doctrine to prove that it is not so. Or such a demonstration must be given of the turpitude of moral evil, else vice would reign triumphant in the universe. This is not an improbable consequence, and, at all events, it is for him who resists an article that the Scripture affirms to make it positively out that no such consequence would follow. These are all so many semblances of truth before the revelation, and the effect of the revelation is to turn the semblances into certainties. Their use, when semblances, is not to contribute much if any affirmative weight to the testimony of Scripture, it is to convince the objector how much he has to overcome, how many plausibilities and conjectures he must first dispose of, ere he is entitled to resist that testimony. They perform an important function, but not, we think, in the way of supplying positive argument for the truth of the doctrine. The great master argument is still the declaration of the Bible, and now that the declaration is made, there is a sureness and a solidity stamped on the principles of the *a priori* reasonings which did not formerly belong to them. They do not help, save in a negative way, to the establishment of the doctrine. But now I read them as so many lessons in the doctrine itself, and gather from the contemplation of it a deeper reverence than I

ever had before for that law which required such an awful vindication of its outraged dignity, and that Lawgiver whose sacredness it has illustrated by the sufferings, by the worth and the greatness of so costly an expiation.

BOOK IV.—CHAP. III.—SECT. I.

DOCTRINE OF THE ATONEMENT.

THE PRAYER.

WE would do homage, O God, to Thy supremacy over all the affairs of this lower world. Thou rulest both in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth. The processes of all nature and all history are but the footsteps of Thine administration; and, in the countless diversity of operations, still it is God who worketh all in all. Be Thou enthroned in our wayward and rebellious hearts, O God. Take unto Thyself Thy great power and reign over them. Thou art able to subdue all things unto Thyself: subdue our stubborn, our headstrong wills, and cast down every lofty imagination, and every thing within us that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God. Be with us now and ever.—Amen.

According to the definitions given of sin, guilt, and punishment, you will observe that the advocates of the orthodox system do not ascribe sin to Jesus Christ, that is, that personally He was a sinner, or that there adhered to His character aught of the taint of moral evil. But neither will they regard His sufferings in the light of simple inflictions, but in the light of inflictions because of sin, though not His own sin, but the sin of those for whom He died. And they understand, therefore, the term guilt, not as that which indicates a residing pollution in him who is chargeable therewith—they understand guilt merely as liableness to punishment, by which they mean that Christ had to undergo the full weight, at least, of all the legal chastisements due to sin—that He submitted to a treatment which, in the eye of the law, He would have deserved had He

personally committed all those sins which have been expiated by His blood, not that personally He was a sinner, but that forensically He was regarded and treated as such, and thus took upon Himself a burden as great as the punishment that we should have borne.

I would bid you fasten upon the expression of there being other "reasons which we are not qualified to perceive," which might, if we knew the whole, be adduced in vindication of the doctrine of the atonement.* Now this single consideration is of itself enough to furnish a clear ground for the establishment, and valid establishment, of the doctrine on the positive evidence of Scripture. The preparation for the testimony of Scripture regarding any doctrine, is not that we know reasons why that doctrine is likely, or probable, or true, but, for aught we know, there may be such reasons. Now, I would extend this principle not merely to the unspecified reasons adverted to in this clause, but also to all the reasons which have been specifically adduced in the text-book for the purpose of demonstrating the rationality of the doctrine. We prodigiously strengthen our cause, we make it far less vulnerable to the attack of enemies, we place it more securely beyond all cavil and all captiousness, when, instead of resting it in part or in whole on the positive foundation of reason, we count it enough by the *argumentum ab ignorantia* to ward off objections, and so give the doctrine an impregnable basis on the testimony of Scripture. I would not say, as at the commencement of this section, that the first principle on which the doctrine proceeds is one taken from our own reason and sense of morality; enough that the doctrine may be true for aught which our own reason and sense of morality can suggest to the contrary. It is thus that you throw, and most logically and legitimately throw, the *onus* of establishing the contrary on your antagonists, and at the same time give that first and foremost place to the affirmations of Scripture which properly belongs to them. I would greatly prefer, then, the argument of this section as far as it has proceeded hitherto to be thrown into this shape. The Almighty

* Vol. ii. p. 405.

in requiring an atonement may be only acting as the supreme Lawgiver—there may have been no anger to appease by this transaction, nor personal jealousy of His own dignity, nor that desire of justice which actuates a creditor in the prosecution of a debtor, in insisting upon a surety—there may have been nothing of all this, but it may have been for the upholding of the moral government, and protecting it from the inroads of that anarchy which the pardon of sin without an atonement would have brought along with it. It may have been wholly for this most worthy and beneficent object that aught like vindictive or punitive justice has been put forth in the great deed of the world's propitiation; and we cannot know whether this end might not have been answered by the transference of the punishment to the person of the exalted and withal voluntary substitute; it is for reasons not which we absolutely know to be solid and just, but which, for aught we know, may be solid and just, that on this question we shall resign ourselves wholly and exclusively to the testimony of Scripture. It is thus that I would have all the *a priori* reasonings to be brought forward, not in the shape of positive but of conjectural affirmations. By this proceeding we shall not ultimately lose the benefit of the important principle which they involve, for the revelation itself, after we have thus made room for it, will go far to decide the question of the truth and justice of those principles, will go far to brighten the conjectures towards certainties, and thus enlighten us in the jurisprudence of the whole question through the medium not of the wisdom of man, but through the medium of the word of God.

It is of the utmost importance to your practical sense and impression of the Divine character, that while, on the one hand, you do not regard it as consisting of mercy alone—an error of Socinians, and of those opposed to the doctrine of the atonement—so you do not regard it as consisting of justice alone, an error into which we are apt to be betrayed by the injudicious representations of those who are friendly to that doctrine. For this purpose remember, in the first place, that it was not the love of God which stood, as it were, in abey-

ance till a propitiation was rendered, it was the love of God which originated and set forth that propitiation. The gospel is just a manifestation of the mercy and kindness of God to us through Christ Jesus. And then, in the second place, if our sins did present an obstacle which required a mighty suffering and sacrifice on the part of the Son of God ere pardon could be granted to them—if the interests and dignity of the moral government made such a way of redemption indispensable—if God, that the world and its family might not be lost to Him for ever, had to spare not His only beloved Son, but give Him up to the death for us all—then that such a barrier had to be scaled and got over, just enhances the exhibition that has been given of His mercy—a mercy so strong, that it sought for itself a way over such obstructions as but for a scheme of infinite wisdom, and an act of infinite condescension, would have been wholly impassable. The mercy of the gospel is mercy in much higher exhibition than a simple movement of compassion would have been that came spontaneously in the breast of the Godhead, and that cost no expense either of toil or of suffering for its indulgence. It was a mercy that had to struggle as it were for a discharge of itself through the moral difficulties of an outraged law that called for reparation, of an insulted government, whose dignity must be upholden, of a jurisprudence trampled under foot in the face of men and of angels, and which, if not vindicated, the Lord of creation would have wielded an impotent sceptre, and sat on a degraded throne. It was amid the conflict of high elements like these, that mercy kept by its purpose, and at the cost of infinite humiliation and deepest agony to the only beloved Son of God, at once harmonized all the attributes of the divinity, and rejoiced over them. I think the effect of our academic theism has been to give us a cold and naked and unimpressive view of the Deity, very unlike in impression to the warm endearing representations of Scripture.

I trust that I have said nothing in disparagement of the great principles that the authority of God's law should be upheld, that every demonstration should be held forth of the evil

of sin, that mercy should be administered, but in such a way as neither to bring down the honour of God's justice and truth, nor in such a way as to relax the obligations of morality in the world—I trust I have said nothing in disparagement of these principles, because I have repeatedly affirmed in your hearing, that instead of seeing them placed as so many confident affirmations in the preliminary reasonings on the subject of the atonement, I should rather like to see them placed as so many corollaries to a doctrine resting mainly on the authority of Scripture, and would therefore regard them as so many lessons to be stated and drawn from the contemplation of the atonement itself. We do not need any positive and *a priori* dogmatizing on heaven's jurisprudence, ere we prepare a way for the testimonies of Scripture on the subject; for even though that whole field of contemplation were, prior to revelation, an utter blank, and so as that we were neither entitled to say nor to gainsay aught about the matter, this at least would leave us on equal terms with the Socinians ere we entered on the examination of the Bible, and give us the benefit of all the distinct and explicit averments which occur so copiously in its pages.

But while we thus think that in the conduct of the argument, it is far better not to lay any stress beforehand on the natural principles of morality and reason, unless in so far as to make sure that, for aught we can perceive, there is at least no contradiction to these principles in the article at issue, yet we cannot be blind to the fact, that in virtue of the doctrine being so accordant as it is with man's moral nature, it gains a far readier attention and acceptance than it otherwise would from the people to whom it is addressed. It is just because the conscience of man does such homage to the law's uncompromising nature, that the doctrine of an atonement, by which the demands of the law have been satisfied, is so welcomed by us. It is just because of the impression that is on all unsophisticated spirits of a God whose truth and justice cannot be trifled with, and whose sacredness cannot sustain violation without vindication and redress from the outrage, that the sinner re-

joices in the scheme by which the Lawgiver may be exalted, and yet himself, the transgressor of the law, be safe. I would certainly not found much on the accordancy which obtains between the doctrine of the atonement on the one hand, and the sentiments and the surmises and the fear of man's moral nature on the other, in the shape of an *a priori* argument; but I rejoice in the great practical worth and importance which belong to this accordancy, as that which in point of fact speeds the acceptance of the doctrine among men. These feelings and intimations of my moral nature are not the avenue through which I find my way to the demonstrative establishment of the doctrine, but they are the avenue through which the doctrine itself, when proposed and stated as in Scripture, finds its way to my heart. I am led to close with it not only because it meets my difficulties and my fears, but because it maintains untarnished my reverence both for the Lawgiver and the law; and this felt coincidence between the remedy of the gospel and the exigencies of my condition, not only forms a distinct evidence for its truth, but adds to the amount of that internal evidence in favour of the whole Scripture, grounded on the adaptation of its discoveries and its truths to the nature of those subject or recipient minds for whose benefit it was formed.

And now do we feel ourselves at full liberty to speak of the actual benefits which accrue to us from this method of our recovery, when these are insisted on not as a positive argument beforehand by which to establish it, for the precise argumentative power which belongs to this consideration it were exceedingly difficult to estimate, but as a felt or an experienced virtue in the doctrine itself, after that on its proper evidence as an article of revelation, we have become persuaded of it and embraced it, and had an actual sense and feeling of its preciousness. The first of these that I would insist upon is the solid peace which it establishes in the mind, and solid for this reason, that it is not liable to disturbance from any part of man's moral nature. There is nothing in the sense of God's authority and truth that can discompose a spirit thoroughly at

rest on the foundation of the atonement and righteousness of Christ, because in these it perceives a far more illustrious vindication both of the divine majesty and character, than if even the law had been left to take its direct way in the infliction of its threatened vengeance on the children of iniquity. And then there is the exquisite manner in which this peace that cometh from the faith of this doctrine can be sustained in the sinner's bosom without disparagement to the sinner's holiness. There is no system, we will venture to say, which could possibly have been imagined, that would have so harmonized the honours of the law with the peace and pardon of those who have broken it—none that could have guaranteed so sure a forgiveness, and yet, to use the language of the psalmist, a forgiveness that keeps entire in the heart of him who receives it the fear of God. “There is forgiveness with Thee that Thou mayest be feared.” None that could have so completely ridded man from the fear of terror, and yet maintained unshaken within his heart the fear of deepest reverence. None in which the assurance of a full and sufficient indemnity could have been so enshrined in sacredness and in the high honours of a law that had in a way so marvellous, and yet so effective, been magnified and made honourable.

BOOK IV.—CHAP. III.—SECT. III.

DOCTRINE OF THE ATONEMENT.

THE PRAYER.

WE again enter into Thy presence, O God, with a solemn sense of Thine august and inviolable purity, as contrasted with the defilement of our own natures. Looking to Thee, O God, may we be made like unto Thee. May we be enabled, through the maintenance of a habitual converse with Thyself, to make head against the opposing forces of a world lying in wickedness. May we put on the whole armour of God to fit and prepare us for this contest; and enable us to strive against sin, to watch and to pray against it, till, by the aids of divine grace, we have been enabled to prevail over it.

We need only revert to the origin of the Jewish ritual, in order to rebut the argument of those who are adversaries to the atonement, and would dispose of the express and explicit language of the New Testament on this subject by affirming it to be a mere accommodation to the usages of the Old Testament. It often happens that celestial things must be expressed in the terms of things which are terrestrial, in which case the annunciation must be understood not in a literal but in a figurative sense. Let it be well considered, however, that the observances of Judaism had not a terrestrial but a celestial origin—that not merely the services of the tabernacle, but its very form and fabrication were after the pattern that God showed to Moses in the Mount. They were types, no doubt, but such types as had their archetypes in heaven. They spoke a language, no doubt, though the language of action and representation; not a language borrowed from the human and the earthly, but a language invented by God Himself, and put forth by Him for the very purpose of expressing the substantial realities of the new dispensation. This view of the matter, if rightly pondered, will not only neutralize, but it will reverse the statement of our antagonists. They would make the sacrifices of the law to be real, and Christ's only figurative, whereas in truth

the real and the figurative must exchange places, the legal being the figurative, and the great gospel sacrifice being the only real one. And let me here state that many do find it a most fascinating contemplation, when made to perceive the truths of the new economy pictured forth in the symbols of the old one. There is in it even somewhat of the charm and entertainment of poetry. The imagination is regaled along with the other faculties, and that not because the connexion between the semblance in Judaism and the substance in Christianity is an imaginary connexion. It is impossible to read the Epistle to the Hebrews without the conviction that what the ancient Church set forth in figure, the later Church sets forth in verification and fulfilment, and that the sustained harmony which obtains between the manifold rites of the Mosaic and the leading truths of the evangelical economies, reflect a mutual evidence and illustration upon both. I promise you that if you enter on this study, you will find it a regaling as well as a confirmatory exercise. The recent work of Dr. Brown of Eskdalemuir, introduces you into a very minute and statistical acquaintance with the polity and the usages and the religious architecture and rites of the Jewish nation. But some of our ordinary commentators have evinced, in a way that is very satisfactory to myself, the manner in which the ceremonial of Judaism might be legitimately impregnated with evangelism. I will not go further at present than recommend Matthew Henry on Leviticus; not that he does not spiritualize to a greater extent than perhaps he is warranted to do, but that he will impress on most readers a well-grounded conviction of there being indeed a substantial harmony between the two dispensations, besides imparting a very pleasing and peculiar interest to a portion of Scripture in which a mere cursory or general reader may perhaps recognise no substance and no significance whatever.

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It is possible to raise a bulky erudition on any question in theology. The controversy relating to sacrifices has been prodigiously extended through the various topics which have now

been engaging us. Their various kinds among the heathen—the source in which they originated—the understanding which the people had of them—have all been the subject of many a weary and ponderous argumentation. I trust you perceive that in this theological warfare the struggle between the parties on any one of these questions is but a mere affair of outposts, which, however determined, leaves the main strength of the case on both sides very much what it was. There is really no determination which can be come to on those topics that will essentially either obscure or augment the scriptural, which is the proper evidence on the point at issue. I would not, therefore, advise you to waste much of your strength and time upon this question. Argumentatively, the heathen sacrifices are of little use to us in the work of defending or establishing the doctrine of the atonement, and yet I would have you to perceive the distinction here, that historically and practically they might have been of the very utmost use in preparing the way of the heathen for the reception of the Christian truth upon the subject. It has been well remarked in the text-book, that the practice of sacrifices gave rise to a language which made it possible to convey the truth to them in terms which could be understood. There is one way in which we do annex great practical value to those heathen sacrifices. I do not think they are of much service to the controvertists of the present day in arming them with a sensibly greater force of argument on the side of orthodoxy; but I think they may have been of very great service to the converts of the Apostolical day, as perhaps in many instances being the very stepping-stone on which their attention was gained to the Christian message that told of the great and the only sufficient sacrifice. I cannot estimate the argumentative force in favour of the atonement which lies in these heathen sacrifices, nor do I feel that there is much if any force in them at all. But along with this, I can understand that the sacrificial notions of the heathen, and their familiarity with the conceptions and the feelings involved in the whole system of their sacrifices, may in millions of instances have made them far more intelligent and more willing recipients

than they would otherwise have been of that gospel which set forth the great propitiation that had been made by means of an illustrious victim for the sins of the world, and preached forgiveness of these sins through faith in His blood.

But certainly the most important preparation for the Christian doctrine of the atonement was the Jewish sacrifices ; and what gives a peculiar value to it is, that they were appointed for the very object of preparation. They were the shadows of the things that were to come. I have already remarked on the strange inversion that has been practised here by the advocates of Socinianism, in that they have turned the shadow into substance, and the substance into shadow, affirming the literality of the Jewish sacrifices only, and representing the great Christian sacrifice as but a figure taken from this literality and grounded thereupon. We know that in spite of the general rejection of the gospel by the Jewish nation, there were a great many Jewish converts notwithstanding, it being particularly mentioned in the Acts that a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith. I cannot imagine, then, a more systematic deceit to have been practised on a whole people, begun many centuries before, and persevered in through successive generations, than the deceit which the whole scheme of the Jewish polity and ceremonial was calculated to practise upon the Jewish understanding, provided that the death of Christ was not a real propitiation for the sins of mankind. Those Hebrews who were converted to the faith are told in terms the most simple and unqualified that we can possibly conceive, that Christ was offered up a sacrifice to God ; and whenever the analogy is adverted to between the Jewish and this great Christian sacrifice, it is with the view of representing the latter as the antitype or the archetype of the former, the latter as the substantial verification, the former as but the symbol or figurative representation thereof. At all events, the ceremonial sacrifice in the opinion of all the Jews had a virtue tantamount to the deliverance of the sinner from ceremonial uncleanness or guilt ; and there is nothing in the New Testament which could ever lead them to conceive otherwise, every

thing rather there which should directly lead them to view the death of Christ as a real sacrifice, having a virtue in it to discharge or do away the real and substantial guilt of every soul which put its confidence therein. Let me again recommend your studious and sustained attention to the Epistle to the Hebrews; and I should rejoice if any of you felt emboldened on my advice to grapple with a work so ponderous, as Owen's Commentary on that Epistle—a lengthened and laborious enterprise certainly, but now is your season for abundant labour; and the only thing to be attended to is, that in virtue of being well directed, it shall not be wasted on a bulky though at the same time profitless erudition. I promise you a hundredfold more advantage from the perusal of this greatest work of John Owen, than from the perusal of all that has been written on the subject of the heathen sacrifices. It is a work of gigantic strength as well as gigantic size; and he who hath mastered it is very little short, both in respect to the doctrinal and practical of Christianity, of being an erudite and accomplished theologian.

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There is no subject on which a man of *a priori* spirit, who must have a why and a wherefore for every phenomenon, meets with less satisfaction than in his attempt to explain the rationale or the purpose of many an apparently inconsequential thing which he meets with in Scripture. There is an analogy on this subject which I have often thought is not without its force, between the book of nature and the book of revelation. There are passages in both, the meaning and object of which we are at a loss to determine. There are the extended deserts, the dreary climes unpeopled of all rational and intelligent life, the mighty waste of waters where else there might have been the fair and fertile abodes of man; and besides, there are the fierce or loathsome animals, the tormenting insects, the deadly poisons, and many other things alike inexplicable, and which yet scarcely obscure, and far less obliterate, the evidence which, in varied characters of beauty and magnificence and design, attests that nature has a God. And in like manner there are

portions in the book of Scripture to us meaningless—some may even think mischievous things, in this other product of the great Creator, whole chapters of barren nomenclature, catalogues of generations and families whose appellations only are all that now survive, genealogies which run in streams from a very early commencement in the world's history, but which are now lost at their termination in the general ocean, as it were, of the species, and then such a laborious minuteness of complication both in the ritual of Judaism and in the construction of its religious edifices, such a labyrinth of manifold observances, such, to all appearance, arbitrary and capricious distinctions between the clean and the unclean in meats and animals and persons, such an anxious multiplicity of prescriptions about the order of their most fatiguing ceremonial, and the ingredients of its various offerings, so many other inexplicable things in this said Bible as may be exceedingly difficult for us fully and satisfactorily to explain, and yet which can never overbear that flood both of moral and historical light that speaks its divine origin, and invests it in celestial splendour. The first set of enigmas, however unintelligible in themselves, does not make the whole of nature unintelligible, so that it should not speak to us most clearly and audibly of a God; and the second set of enigmas, though equally unintelligible in themselves, does not make the general voice of the book unintelligible, or deafen at all our perception of the characters which belong to it of a voice from heaven. And more than this, just as the students of nature are making daily progress in the discovery of utilities before unobserved, and where none had been previously suspected to exist, just as in the progress of physical science objections are converting into proofs, and a beneficent purpose, more especially in the frameworks of anatomy, is now recognised in what before looked a useless or a hurtful excrescence, there is a striking parallel to this in the labours and the criticisms of those who are exploring the book of revelation. The harmonies of the world are not more glorious or more indicative of a presiding wisdom in the construction of it than the harmonies of the word. The intricacy of those organic combinations,

which even the humblest insect realizes, does not tarnish the majesty of Him who, while He thus stoops to the work of microscopic arrangement, is throned in sovereign ascendancy over all worlds ; and neither ought the specific injunctions which He gave to Moses, respecting the framework of the tabernacle, to cast obscurity over the glory of Him who had just manifested from the flaming top of Sinai the terrors of His greatness and of His might to the thousands of Israel. But, as I have just said, there is a purpose evolving itself more and more to the eye of inquirers in things which before looked meaningless or mysterious in the Bible. The symphonies between the Old and the New dispensations are becoming more evident ; and just as modern history and ancient prophecy reflect illustration on each other, so the further we observe in the Christian economy, the more instinct with life and sentiment do we behold the economy of Judaism. We are aware of the ridiculous excesses into which commentators have fallen, when, outrunning all the lights of sober interpretation, they would attach a spiritual meaning and force to every pin of the tabernacle ; yet neither the derision of enemies, nor the folly of injudicious advocates, can obscure this great and general proposition, that Judaism represents in symbol what Christianity has revealed to us in substance, and that in that comparative infancy of the world they to whom the oracles of God were committed, saw, though in greater dimness, and as if through a medium of dawning twilight, the great lineaments of the gospel scheme, the placability of God in that He forgives the offences of the penitent, yet a placability exercised in such a way as to vindicate the honour of His law, in that the forgiveness was rendered through the ceremonial of a prescribed sacrifice, dictated by a God jealous of His majesty, and who would only be approached in the way that Himself had appointed. This is becoming more manifest now than it was to the theologians of an older generation ; and then as to the excessive scrupulosity about meats and other observances, there is a great purpose that can be discerned in all this. It was of utmost practical importance that that nation who were to be the selected depo-

sitory for many centuries of the special counsels of God, should have a wall of separation thrown around them so as to preserve them from all the contaminations of heathenism, and more especially, from losing their individuality in being merged and mingled with the people by whom they were surrounded. There could not be a more effectual device towards this end than that of multiplying the points of distinction between them and all other people, and attaching to the non-observance of what they observed, and to the rigid observance of what to them was unknown, all the force and sacredness of a religious obligation. It is thus that many prescriptions, which might appear quite trifling and irrelevant to us, did, for aught we know, or rather must, we certainly know, subserve this great object in the policy, if it may be so termed, of the divine administration.

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The mercy-seat sprinkled with blood is an expressive emblem of the Christian doctrine of our atonement. It is not simply to the mercy-seat that we are called, but to the mercy-seat thus sprinkled, and which therefore speaks to us of the guilt that had to be cleansed, of the justice that had to be propitiated, of the malignity in sin that called for such a demonstration. This is to the taste and antipathies of unrenewed nature one of the most revolting doctrines in Christianity, a revolt which, in the Apostles' days, was characterized as the offence of the Cross, and a revolt in which the mere disciples of general sentiment and literature still fully sympathize. Nevertheless it is in truth the great palladium of that economy under which we sit, essential both to the peace and the purity of every disciple—a peace that without such an exhibition would be liable to perpetual misgivings from the very suggestions of our moral nature, which no general assurance could possibly quell; for, after all, there would be intruding upon our comfort and our quiet the thought of a God who could not be mocked, of a Sovereign whose law must be upheld in all the rightful authority which belongs to it, of a truth and a justice which it were anarchy to violate, of a throne in heaven that must not be reft of the pillars that support it, and a King sitting on that throne whose

every word is unchangeable, and who ever must maintain an entire and untainted jurisprudence over the creatures whom He hath formed. These our own conscience would ever and anon be suggesting to the mind, and filling it with a sense of constant insecurity; and thus the exquisite skilfulness of that method by which the sacredness of the divinity is even more illustrated in the exercise of His mercy than it would have been by the direct infliction of their threatened penalty on the hosts of the rebellious. Mercy in a general way would have left our moral nature unsatisfied; mercy in a gospel way meets and is at one with every part, as it were, of that nature. It is this perfect adaptation to the human conscience, and more especially the manner in which the doctrine of our atonement enlists on the side of our security those very attributes which, under the law, were in hostile array against us, making, in fact, the justice of God now satisfied, the truth now embarked on the promises of the gospel having already been fully vindicated by the death of Christ in respect to the threatenings of the law, the holiness now irradiated by the spectacle of the cross and of the blood that flowed from it—making these, I say, which were before the immovable barriers in the way of a sinner's reconciliation with God, the guarantees of his safety;—it is this which gives a weight and a preciousness to the doctrine in the feelings of all who are really stricken with a sense of their delinquencies, and who have been led to entertain the question between God and themselves in good earnest. It is a stumbling-stone and a rock of offence, we know, to many, perhaps to the great bulk of human society; but to them who believe it is precious; and when once the conscience of man is fully aroused to the question, there is positively no other doctrine within the whole compass of natural or revealed truth which can meet or satisfy it. And then, in addition to the one great interest of the sinner's peace, I beg you will observe the essential subserviency of this scheme to the other great interest of the sinner's virtue. In the act of stepping into reconciliation by this peculiar way, he hears, as it were, most audible proclamation of the turpitude of moral evil. When entering

on the comforts of the Christian faith he receives the strongest impulse towards Christian repentance, and draws from one and the same contemplation the delightful assurance, "Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee," and the awfully emphatic warning, "Go and sin no more."

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The scape-goat sent into the wilderness is an expressive emblem of the Saviour. It tells by action what our late and more explicit dispensation tells in express and articulate revelation. It signifies the bearing away of our sins to the land of forgetfulness, where no more mention is made of them. Through the medium of this contemplation, too, is the heart of many a Christian made to rejoice in the complete oblivion of all his offences, and the delightful sense, now that his iniquities are carried away, and the barrier of separation is removed, that all is clear with God. This I hold to be one beautiful representation of the truth in figure, or the truth in sensible representation. And there are many such held forth in the Jewish ritual. Let me only instance the people praying in the outer court while the priest was within the temple burning incense—a truly picturesque and expressive representation of the present condition of the Church in its relation to Him who hath entered within the veil, and is there adding His intercession to our prayers, and pleading for us the merits of that atonement, the incense of which is said to rise in grateful memorial before God, like the incense of a sweet-smelling savour. We see in this example what we often meet with when studying the relation of the two economies to each other, the substantial doctrine of the one shadowed forth by the imagery of the other; and now that both are placed before us, the imagery so far from obscuring the doctrine, giving at once both a more powerful and a more pleasing impression of it. This same idea, the incense of our Saviour's merits, mixed up with the prayers of those who believe in Him, is immediately suggested to every pious and intelligent reader of the Bible, by that passage in the book of Revelation, where it is said—"And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there

was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand."—Rev. viii. 3, 4. We are abundantly sensible that in some hands this work of allegoric interpretation has been greatly overdone. Perhaps even good Bishop Horne carries it to occasional excess in his Commentary on the Psalms, on the whole a very precious composition notwithstanding. It is possible to form a caricature of any thing, and certainly this attempt to find out a mystic meaning for one and all of the literalities in the Old Testament has been caricatured. With this deduction, however, there remains a manifold harmony between the rites of the one dispensation and the realities of the other, not a fanciful but a substantial, nay, a designed accordancy, which makes the whole of Scripture profitable even in these latter days, and imparts something of a far higher and more solid value than a mere imaginative charm to the reading of the Old Testament.

BOOK IV.—CHAP. III.—SECT. IV.

THREE GREAT DIVISIONS OF THE LAW OF MOSES.

THE PRAYER.

WE have reason, O God, to lament our exceeding distance and deficiency from Thy law—the frailty of all our purposes—the wretched contrast between our high-toned resolves in the hours of retirement, and the utter prostration of our powers amid the urgency of this world's temptations. Save us, O God, from the punishment of sin, but save us more especially from its power. Deliver us from the agonies of a present guilt as well as from the fears of a coming vengeance; and grant that we may be washed and sanctified, as well as justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

I promise you from the study of the Mosaic ritual, a perfect and well-founded satisfaction in your own mind, that many of

its observances were intended to represent the great Christian atonement; and I am quite sure that any impression of irrationality which you may now associate with the idea of types will be dissipated by your observation of the numerous and sustained analogies which can be specified between the alleged types and the alleged antitypes. Now once you are convinced that a rite may be typical, you will furthermore pass on from this to be reconciled with the idea of typical events and typical personages, and on this stepping-stone, again, you will be led to perceive a rationality in the double sense of prophecy, which at present some of you may not be aware of. The truth is, that once you admit a typical event or a typical personage, then to get to the prophecy with a double meaning, you have merely to assign to the prophet a position anterior to both the type and the antitype. Had there been no typical event or personage shadowing forth the final accomplishment, then that accomplishment could only have been the subject of a simple and direct prophecy. Or even though there were a corresponding type to it in the history that was past, yet if the prophet stood between the type and the antitype, still he can only have uttered a prophecy of single interpretation. A prophecy becomes a double one only from the circumstance of his position, only from the time of the utterance being prior to the time of type and antitype both; and so the humbler and the nearer fulfilment in the one preceded a higher and an ulterior fulfilment in the other. David and Solomon are both alleged to be types of the Saviour. Grant but this, and you are ushered into the admission of double prophecy, by the supposition that one had arisen in the time of the Judges, and predicted the glories of a reign which accorded in its general outline with the prophecy, but fell short perhaps of those glowing and magnificent terms into which the prophecy expanded. You have such predictions of Solomon in the book of Psalms, where the extent and perpetuity of the reign can only find an adequate explanation in the kingdom of the Saviour; and you have another such example in the prophecy of the siege of Jerusalem, where the representation is at length dilated into such expressions as can

only admit of future application to the desolation of all things. I must confess a great prepossession in my own mind against all this in the gross, and at the outset of my attention, but that prepossession has been dissipated by my growing acquaintance with the details, and more particularly do I feel convinced that instead of affording scope for the caprices of imagination, a double prophecy operates as a corrective, and sets additional boundaries in fact against the errors and deviations of this faculty, and serves all the more effectually to chasten and restrain its extravagance.

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I have already insisted at full length on the consideration that Judaism stood to Christianity in the relation of the shadow to the substance. It is the substance which casts the shadow and gives it its shape and its outline. And so they were the realities of the Christian faith which gave their form to the rites and usages of the older dispensation. In the gospel revelation, the heavenly things which are there spoken of are not expressed in terms borrowed from the Mosaic observances, but these heavenly things did at the commencement of the Jewish economy cast down their shadows upon earth, which shadows are just the earthly, the carnal ordinances of the Jewish polity. The sacrifices of the law are but sacrifices in figure, they furnish nothing to the sacrifice of Christ, not even the phraseology in which it is couched and conveyed to the world. It was the great sacrifice of Christ which furnished to them their being, and which gives to them all the significance which they possess. It was at the time when Moses studied the pattern showed to him in the Mount, and made the tabernacle after that pattern, it was then that the substantive realities of the Christian faith were drawn out in the symbolical rites of the Jewish ceremonial; and to make the doctrine of the atonement a mere figurative expression of the placability of God taken from the usages of the children of Israel, is to turn back the stream into the fountainhead, and to make what is primary and what is secondary in this matter change places the one with the other. This view, while it maintains the substance

and the entireness of important truth, exhibits the connexion between the two dispensations, and shows that while God had respect to the latter in the institution of the former, man under the pupilage and in the training of the former was prepared for the fuller and broader revelations of the latter economy.

It is needless to say more on the topic, that what was but shadows in the system of Judaism, was substance in the system of Christianity. But I may here take the opportunity of animadverting on the Socinian evasion taken notice of at the end of this section—a shift which evinces at least how much the doctrine of a sacrifice annoys them, and how bent they are at all hazards to get out of it. It is like the last and desperate fetch of men, who though vanquished a thousand times over, are yet resolved to die hard upon the question; and I beg, if you have not yet studied particularly the two or three paragraphs where it is stated and refuted in the text-book, you will look at it again as a specimen, I think a fair one, of the Socinian expedients in their controversy with the orthodox on this matter. You are aware that in the case of individual sin-offerings the victim was slain not by the priest but by the offerer; the slaying of the victim in their account then was but a circumstance, and the great virtue of the transaction lay not in it, but in the oblation made by the priest, or the part which he afterwards took in it. And even on the day of atonement, though it was the priest who slew the victim with his own hands, yet that was but a circumstance too, for far the most important part of the ceremony was his entering into the holy of holies, and appearing before the mercy-seat. And so putting aside from view the sacrificial part of these observances, they would in like manner put out of view the death of Christ as a sacrifice, and contend that His priesthood did not lie there, did not begin in fact with any part of His history on earth, or with anything He did in this world, but took its commencement with His entrance into heaven, being the counterpart to that entrance which the Jewish high-priest made into the holy of holies. You are aware of the odd turns which

theological speculation has often taken, and I am sure you have only to look over a list of the titles of exegeses, for multitudes of questions which the plain reader of the Bible never would have thought of. But the reason is, that the Church militant has been compelled to take up its positions and to shape its arguments, so as to meet the endless varieties of capricious and unlicensed speculation; and on studying the history of doctrinal Christianity, you will find that the Church really did not originate the greater number of those questions, but was compelled, in defence of the truth, to go forth on the combat with the errors which multiplied so interminably on every side of it. These questions did not originate with the orthodox but with the heretical, and I do hope that as controversy subsides, which it will do with the progress of true Christian philosophy, I say that in proportion as this takes place, a very great number of questions, transmitted in Latin from one professor of theology to another, and dealt out to the students as the topics of those most agreeable and entertaining of our College exercises, we mean the exegeses, will at length be superseded, and, sunk in the shades of obsolescence and oblivion, will be no longer heard of. It is this puerile imagination of the Socinians which I have now been adverting to, that gave rise to the question whether Jesus Christ acted as a priest upon earth.

The refutation of the Socinian idea is a very short one. You have it effectively done at the conclusion of this section. It was the priest who made the atonement, but he did it by the blood of the victim. He entered into the holy place, but it was not without blood, which he sprinkled on the mercy-seat; but really, to stand out any longer on this question, in the face of the direct announcement, that neither by the blood of bulls and goats, but by His own blood, Christ entered once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us, I should feel to be a direct and daring act of rebellion against the authority of Scripture.

I cannot take leave of this subject, however, without observing that there is here presented to us another of those beautiful

analogies—the beauty of which, however, I fear, will not be felt, save by those who have a relish for the doctrine of the atonement, and feel it to be precious. The blood that was shed without, in the sacrifices of the law, carried into the holy place, shadows forth the virtue of the propitiation made upon the Cross, as carried upwards to the place of intercession at God's right hand. It blends together, as it were, the atonement and the intercession of Christ, and represents our Advocate on high as armed with the irresistible argument of those sufferings He Himself had endured, and that sacrifice He Himself had finished, by the shedding of His own blood in behalf of those whose prayers He was handing up, perfumed by the incense of His own merits, to the throne of God. Such views, however nauseated by those whose taste is founded on general literature alone, do, I am persuaded, furnish most solid aliment both to the peace and the piety of many an humble Christian.

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The advocates of universal pardon appeal to this verse (Rom. iv. 25) in support of their peculiar tenet. They argue from the similarity of the two phrases—His dying for our offences, and His being raised again for our justification, as that the two must be alike, both in having the character of substantive facts, and also in being co-extensive with the species. He was delivered, because we had offended, and all of us had done so. He rose again, because we are justified, and all of us are so. They have overlooked the distinction, stated in the text-book, (p. 469,) between the antecedent and the final cause. In the first clause, the *for* is not expressive of the final, but of the antecedent cause; because man had sinned, He died, but the final cause of His dying was the remission of their sins, and He rose again, not because all men antecedently were justified, but finally in order to obtain the reward of His obedience, which was the justification of all who believe in Him. When He ascended on high, He obtained gifts for men, one of which was the gift of righteousness, even that righteousness, of which we are told in the former chapter, that

it is unto all, and upon all who believe. If *διὰ* is to be understood as denoting the antecedent cause in the first clause, and the final cause in the second, then that parallelism is destroyed on which they found one of their arguments for an actual pardon having passed upon all men.

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The distinction is very clearly stated in the text-book between the personal and the judicial in the matter of our salvation ; and I hasten to avail myself of the opportunity which it affords me of testifying the strong sense which I have of the indispensableness of both. The whole design of Christianity is not to deliver from a state of judicial condemnation ; it has another design—that of delivering us from a state of personal corruption. It is not merely a salvation from wrath, it is a salvation from wickedness ; and were we to separate for a moment in thought two things which, in fact, are so indissolubly joined together that the one is never realized on any individual without the other going along with it, but separating them for a moment in thought, were I asked which of the two salvations I held to be the most important, and on which of the two I would lay the greatest stress in my expositions of the gospel of Jesus Christ, I would say, that if the end is greater than the means—if the *opus operatum* is greater than the instrument by which it was accomplished—if the thing for which an achievement takes place be a higher and more important consideration than the thing by which the achievement is executed—then I would say, that in point of real worth, the personal salvation has by far the precedency over the judicial. The provision for the sinner's holiness is of greater moment than the provision for the sinner's safety. The one is the terminating object, the other but the stepping-stone ; the one is the landing-place, the other but the introduction or entrance on the road that leads to it. That surely is the greater which forms the ultimate design, and that the lesser which stands to it in but a preparatory relation, or in a relation of subserviency. Christ died for our sins, and thereby a great judicial deliverance was wrought out

for those who believe in Him ; but this was done in order to a something ulterior—He died for our sins, in order that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

I am the more eager to seize on the opportunity of thus delivering myself, that of late, in my Thursday lectures, I have been more led to expatiate on the forensic relation in which we stand to God, and how it is that that relation has been changed by the interposition of Christ in our favour. This change, then—this change in our forensic relation—is due to Him, and to Him wholly. They are His sufferings, and these alone, which have obtained our remission at the bar of justice from the penalties of hell. They are His services, and these alone, which have obtained for us at the bar of justice a right to the rewards of heaven. Our own services do not contribute one iota to either of these objects ; and I hold it of capital importance in your expositions of Christianity, not merely your affirming constantly that we are justified by faith, but that we are justified by faith alone ; not merely that our plea in equity for a blissful immortality is the righteousness of Christ, but that it is a plea which cannot in the least be added to, cannot in the least be strengthened by any righteousness of our own. Our title-deed to heaven is not that to which Christ on the one hand, and man on the other, have contributed their respective shares. The matter is not thus partitioned between the sinner and the Saviour ; and it is not in point of theoretical consistency, but in point of practical effect, that I would have you to hold it as of the most vital importance for you yourselves to understand, and to make your people understand, that in the forming of that title-deed, Christ has done everything, and man has done and can do nothing.

Now, alongside of this strenuous asseveration, I would asseverate as strenuously, that without holiness no man can see God. I fear that some of you have met our doctrine, more especially of an imputed righteousness, with the suspicion or the fear that an Antinomianism lurked under it. Let me, therefore, bid you advert to what I hold a distinction of capital

importance between one method and another of guarding any article of our faith against the abuses to which it may be liable. One method is by qualifying the article itself—by laying something like a deduction or an exception upon it, and thus diluting, as it were, the whole spirit and substance of the article. For example, some would modify in this way the doctrine of an imputed righteousness. They would say, that without the righteousness of Christ we could have no valid plea of admission; but neither could we, having that plea without our own righteousness into the bargain. Both must go together; and so, in a certain vague and indeterminate way, they would make man's merits enter along with Christ's merits into the completed title-deed of the rewards of immortality. And so, too, when the same doctrine is expressed in the shape of justification by faith. They will allow that without faith there can be no justification, that faith is a *sine qua non*, but so also are works,—both help, both—and they can quote passages of Scripture for this—both are indispensable for our admission into heaven; and so the use they would make of this undoubted and indispensable necessity for the personal virtue of man, is, that though justified by faith, he is not justified by faith alone. And all this, in order to guard the doctrine of the sinner's justification, as laid down in Scripture, from the abuse of Antinomianism. Now, there is another way of guarding against this abuse, and I call on you to remark how different it is from the former way, and, I may add, how infinitely solider, and sounder, and more consonant with all that is right and obvious on the principles of the subject. Have a care lest you mitigate and reduce any one doctrine of Christianity, but be sure to bring it forward in all the fulness and decision of those scriptural testimonies which support it; and I am very sure, if observant of this rule, you cannot possibly deduct from an article conveyed in language so very express as that a man “is justified by faith without the works of the law.”—“To him that worketh not but believeth in Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.”—“For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is

the gift of God.”—“Not of works, lest any man should boast.”—“We have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law.” And to put an end to all partitioning between these two elements, we have the following remarkable testimony: “And if by grace, then is it no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace; but if it be of works, then is it no more grace, otherwise work is no more work.”

How, then, is it that we guard against the abuses of Antinomianism in this doctrine, if not by a mitigation of it? My reply is, that I would mitigate nothing—I would diminish nothing; but instead of bringing forward only one doctrine, I would make a full and faithful exhibition of all the doctrines of the New Testament. It is strange that this very obvious expedient should be really so much overlooked. If the New Testament were brought forward as a whole, it would be found of one part that it would effectually operate as a corrective against the apprehended evils that may be conceived to lie in another part of it. These evils are realized by those exclusionists in theology who select their own favourite article, and throw everything else that is in the field of revelation on the background of their contemplation altogether. Now, the way in which some ministers would protect their auditors from the abuses to which this or any other article is liable when viewed singly and apart, is to keep it back, and so perhaps to make it retire into a state of greater distance and indistinctness than before. This is the first way; but the second I hold to be infinitely better, which is, not to cast any of the truths or articles back, but to bring one and all of them equally forward, at least as much forward as the Scripture itself does. The doctrine of justification by faith alone may be abused if suffered to monopolize the whole field of vision, but it is not so liable to be abused when you place by the side of it, in characters equally luminous and equally emphatic—“I tell you, nay, unless ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.” The doctrine of a man not being justified by works may induce an undervaluing of works to the man who harps exclusively upon this one quota-

tion, but not to the man who looks with open and honest eye to this other quotation—"We shall be judged by the deeds done in the body, and shall receive every man according to his works;" so, in fact, as to authorize this weighty and memorable sentence—justified by faith, yet judged by works. It is not by casting the obscuration of a fainter and dimmer light over the first clause, that you disarm the mischief wherewith some conceive it to be impregnated; but it is by bringing out to the full light of day both the clauses, and giving an equal prominence to both. Let Christianity, viewed in its entirety, be left to furnish the guards and the correctives which may be necessary for preventing the abuses of a limited or partial contemplation of it. It has within itself a counteraction to every apprehended evil; but it makes all the difference whether man shall take his way of providing a security against those evils by veiling certain parts of the testimony, or, acting the part of a faithful steward, shall deal forth all the mysteries of the kingdom of God just as they have been put into his hand, and so give effect to God's way of it, just by a broad and fair and full exhibition of His word, and of all the doctrines and declarations and precepts which are to be found in it.

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These two expressions, "justified by his blood" and "through faith in his blood," suggest a very important distinction between two things, the object of faith and the act of faith, the one the ground or efficient cause of our justification, the other but the instrument by which we receive it. It is not a mere metaphysical distinction subservient only to the adjustment of a useless speculation. It is a distinction of great practical utility, and, when rightly applied, eminently serviceable to the peace and establishment of many an else anxious inquirer. You will observe, that whereas the great aim of the legal economy of "Do this and live," would be obedience, so under the new economy of "Believe and be saved," the great aim is faith. And for this purpose people are very apt to look inwardly for the act of faith, instead of looking outwardly to its object. Why, in this case, they are just in as likely a way of finding that which

they are in quest of, as the man who, to ascertain whether he had a real sight of any external thing, would, for the determination of this question, try to invert his eye backward upon the retina, and ascertain whether a picture of the object had been projected there. The best way of getting at the ocular sight is to look fully and openly and objectively on the outer thing, and the best way of getting at the mental sight, which is just the faith, is in like manner to look fully and openly and objectively on that which is proposed to your faith. For example, in the case before us, to realize the comfort and influence of the doctrine of the atonement, I would not go in quest of my faith in the blood of Christ, but my thoughts would terminate on the blood itself. I would look abroad on the properties not of that which was reflected from within, but of that which was exhibited from without. I would think of the preciousness and power of a sacrifice so costly, and of the undoubted goodwill on the part both of the Father and the Son which this transaction indicates, and, in short, my view would rest and terminate on the thing to be believed, and not on the belief itself; for in the former way, and not in the latter, it is that we shall ever attain to peace and joy in believing.

Great use, we apprehend, might be made of this distinction between the objective and the subjective in Christianity. I never would, as Antinomians do, and as perhaps is too much the fashion with the most recent and remarkable at present of our sectaries, discard the subjective so far as to dispense with the scriptural injunction of self-examination; but at the same time I never would forget that the objective, looked at and believed in, is the primary source of all moral influence upon the heart, and so furnishes the subjective with all its materials. There can be no reflection from the subjective without a radiance, in the first instance, from the objective; and it is by keeping open communication between the two, or, in other words, by looking externally and directly towards the goodwill of God, the atonement of Christ, the truths of Scripture, which are apart from ourselves, and without ourselves, as so many objects, that the subjective gratitude is awakened. There is an admirable chapter

by Richard Baxter on the melancholy habit of those people who are constantly employed in thinking on their thoughts instead of thinking on the proper objects of thought. It is a habit which lays open the Christian mind to a thousand fluctuations, but more generally on the side of distress and despondency. How infinitely better for the secure and stable peace of those religionists, that instead of dwelling on their own inward experiences, and making aught so precarious and changeable as these the ground of their confidence, they would maintain at all times the gospel attitude of looking unto Jesus, they would rest their confidence on the substantialities that were without themselves, and independent of themselves—thus leaning upon what in Scripture is called a sure foundation, and ever breathing in peaceful security, because ever looking to Him who is the same to-day, and yesterday, and for ever.

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I think there is a beauty in this whole explanation,* and more especially in the distinction between the *πάρσεις*, as applied to the sins committed prior to the decease that was accomplished in Jerusalem, and the *ἄψεις*, as applied to the sins committed now and from the time that the new economy of the gospel was set up in the world. And it goes to evince the substantial oneness of the two dispensations; and that under the system of Judaism men were essentially under the same moral regime as under the system of Christianity—the one being but a development of the other, or the one being in early twilight what the other is in the fulness and splendour of the risen day. This will explain how it is that there is so much in the exercises of a pious spirit under the former economy, as portrayed in the book of Psalms, to meet the experience and accord with the feelings of a pious spirit under the new economy. The truth is, that what the sacrifice of Christ now has fully disclosed respecting the character of God, was also, though dimly and through the medium of symbolical representation, perceived by the holy men of old who belonged to the Church of Israel. They had the same complex view

* Vol. ii. pp. 492-494.

of the justice and placability of the Supreme Being as exhibited in the whole system of their sacrificial worship; and so the same objective religion, though obscurely beheld, to call forth from the subjective spirit of many the very penitence and the very faith which form the great elements of actual and experimental religion in the present day.

In that remarkable passage where the doctrine of a propitiation by Christ is so expressly affirmed in connexion with its principle, even the vindication of the justice of God when conferring forgiveness on the guilty, we have, as if for the purpose of completing the vindication, and leaving out nothing which might be alleged in opposition to it, the forgiveness considered in two relations, in relation to the current forgiveness that is going on now under the full establishment of the Christian economy; and the forgiveness that was awarded in times past, before the rendering of the great propitiation when our Saviour called out that it was finished, and bowed down His head, and gave up the ghost. I have already remarked on the beauty of an expression, peculiar and appropriate, by which the forgiveness of those in times prior to the commencement of our era is rendered in the original *πάρεσις*, instead of the ordinary term, *ἄφεσις*. I would have you also to remark, that this is stated to have been done through the forbearance of God, a word distinct even in meaning from forgiveness, inasmuch as the one is the final act of pardon, the other is the withholding of the act of punishment or correction. But what I more especially would have you to remark at present, is the apparent anxiety on the part of the apostolic mind to do away any exception which might be alleged against the justice of God, in that the punishment consequent on the transgression of His law was not actually inflicted on those who had disobeyed it, either in times past, or now during the current history of the Divine administration. It marks a feeling on his part of the necessity for such a vindication being made fully out; and accordingly he states, at the conclusion of his argument, that this sacrifice, comprehending a provision for the forgiveness of sinners, both under the old and under the new dispensation, was

required in order that God might be just while the justifier of them who believe in Jesus. I hold this, therefore, to be a direct scriptural affirmation, not merely of the atonement as a fact, but of the atonement in connexion with its principle, the principle of so exercising the mercy of God as that it shall not encroach on His attribute of justice. It was done in this way that God may at once be a just God and a Saviour—that God may be just while the justifier of those who believe in Jesus.

BOOK IV.—CHAP. IV.

ETERNAL LIFE.

THE PRAYER.

WE would render thanks to Thee, O God, for Thine unspeakable gift, Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent to be the Saviour of the world. We rejoice in the fulness of His salvation, that He has not only offered up His body a sacrifice for the sins of the world, but that after He died and rose again, He obtained gifts for the rebellious, even that Spirit which is poured abundantly on all who believe in Him. We would conform ourselves, O God, to the whole of this economy, both trusting in that forgiveness which is through His blood, and walking in that strength by which He enables His disciples to perform all holy obedience. Be with us now and ever, for His sake.—Amen.

It is very true that we are not able to draw a line of demarcation between those things which enter into the passive and those which enter into the active obedience of Christ; and it is also true that, in voluntary suffering on the one hand, there behoved to be the forthputting of that resolute determination, which may be conceived of as a positive quality, while, in the strenuous and sustained obedience on the other, there may have been the endurance of much pain and of many sore and bitter privations. It may therefore be difficult to disentangle from each other the specific deeds which enter into the two

distinct sorts of obedience ; and yet there may be no difficulty in perceiving generally, that by the pains which our Saviour underwent He made an end of sin, and by the performances which He achieved, He brought in an everlasting righteousness. We hold it of importance in Christian doctrine, to generalize the conception of a right wrought out for us by the mediatorial services of Christ, in virtue of which they who believe have not only a right of exemption from the sufferings of evil, but have also a right of admission into the blissful tenements of heaven. We think that what Adam undid by disobedience, Christ set up again by His obedience, and that the recovery and the ruin are counterparts to each other. Now, Adam forfeited his right to all the enjoyments of eternal life, as well as brought down upon himself, and all the sinners who descended from him, the inflictions both of great moral and great physical wretchedness. By Christ the whole of this mischief was repaired ; and as it was the forfeiture of a right which entailed upon us the whole mischief, so it is the re-establishment of a right which has secured to us the benefit of a whole reparation. The one is co-extensive with the other. And so the justification of a believer includes in it not merely a title to be released from the sentence of condemnation, but a title to the inheritance of blessedness. When justified by faith, we not only have peace with God, in virtue of which He lifts away from us the hand of an avenger, but flowing from this justification, we rejoice in hope of the glory of our God ; or, in other words, He opens upon us the hand of a rewarder. In the Lord, it is stated, that we have redemption ; but, as if that were not the only privilege, and not the same with others included in the enumeration, it is also stated, that in Him we have righteousness. The two are distinct and distinguishable ; and the difficulty which attaches to the mere attempt of classifying the deeds of our Saviour's obedience into active and passive, should not obscure the specific difference, both in respect of their functions and their effects, which lies between the legal deed of acquittal on the one hand, and the legal bestowment of a reward upon the other. We feel persuaded that there is abundant evidence in

Scripture for this distinction, and still more, that it does strengthen the security of the Christian, and makes him perceive a broader and more multiple harmony between his salvation and the whole character of God, when made to understand that He is not only merciful, but just and faithful to forgive our sins; and not only merciful, but just and faithful to bestow upon us the rewards of a blessed immortality. On the whole, I know not a better definition of justification than that given in our Shorter Catechism, and in which are comprehended both the right to deliverance from evil, and the right to a part and a possession in the joys of heaven—"Justification is an act of God's free grace, wherein he pardoneth all our sins, and accepteth us as righteous in His sight." These two things may be separated. A man may be pardoned, and so have the burden of punishment and wrath lifted off from his person, without being accepted into positive favour, or being admitted to the preferment of a positive reward. The gospel includes both.

I beg you to understand, once for all, that though very few theologians make a distinction between Christ's active and his passive obedience, that does not imply that there are few who conceive of Christ's whole mediatorial service, that it includes a right not merely to the remission of sin, because Christ hath borne its penalty, but also a right to the reward of righteousness, because Christ hath earned its full remuneration. There may be no foundation in Scripture for parcelling out, as it were, the deeds of our Saviour's history into active and passive, but let not any difficulty which may attach to such an undertaking as this, at all obscure a distinction between two things which, though never separated in reality, may certainly be viewed apart from each other as separate objects of thought. I feel quite assured of the practical importance as well as the theoretical justness of such a distinction; and that corresponding to it, as I have already abundantly insisted upon in your hearing, there is a distinction in the actual experience and feeling of those who are inquiring their way to a blissful eternity. We are quite sure that not only do sinners, under the power of strong conviction, feel their appropriate deliverance

in the first of these services, but sinners aiming with all their might at the work of obedience, and for the purpose of establishing a right which, after all, they find to be untenable, find their deliverance in the second of these services. The substitution of Christ, when seen in the one aspect, meets the case of him who sinks and is in heaviness, because of a present remorse and the fear of a future vengeance. The same substitution, when seen in the other aspect, meets the distinct case of him who, without any such sense of helplessness as goes to paralyze his activity, sets forth on the strenuous work of obedience, and that for the purpose of substantiating a claim to the rewards of the law. It is well for the one to be told that Christ has suffered for him, and he may now stand acquitted of the penalty; and it is equally well for the other to be told that Christ has served for him, and he may now be instated in a title to that inheritance which He alone hath purchased, and He alone hath won. Sure we are that the latter proposition will not extinguish the obedience of him who rightly accedes to it;—it will only furnish it with another object and with another aim;—it will transform what before was a mercenary into a willing obedience;—it will substitute the services of gratitude for the services of constraint, and greatly refine and exalt all his notions of virtue, by leading him to regard it not as an instrument by which the reward of heaven is gained, but as being in itself that very reward: the divine beatitude of the upper sanctuary being in fact the beatitude of spirits attuned to the love of God, and formed after the likeness of Him who is Himself the perfection and the pattern of all moral excellence.

I have already adverted to the extreme beauty of the emblematic representation given in the law, and whereby the office of Christ as our advocate and intercessor at the right hand of God is shadowed forth. The people praying in the outer court while the priest within is burning incense, is the scene described in Luke i. This passage has in it a strong doctrinal association, and of which we obtain a most effectual explanation in that epistle which, of all others, deserves most to be studied, for the

purpose both of learning how the rites of the old economy may be impregnated with the spirit and sentiment of the new, and also how the substantial doctrines of the new may be expressed in phraseology borrowed from the ceremonial worship of the old dispensation. It is needless, then, to expatiate on this any further; but I would call on you to remark the mighty importance of what is going to be stated on the subject of the Spirit as the earnest of our inheritance. I will have to ask you presently to mark the difference between a pledge and an earnest—the one being a security for some future payment, and the other being a part of that payment. Taking this view, I know nothing which is more fitted to demonstrate what heaven really is, than the Spirit being denominated the earnest of that glorious inheritance. It is like a first instalment, a payment in part of that which in kind however is the very same with the payment in whole. It would appear from this that our heaven begun is just the work of the Spirit begun in us, even that work which is all righteousness and goodness and truth. Nothing can more expressively evince that the beatitude of that place is just a moral beatitude, than the Spirit being called the earnest of our inheritance, or, in other words, that the fruits of that Spirit, consisting of love and joy and meekness and temperance and long-suffering, form the very treasures which constitute the main reward, the main enjoyment of the upper sanctuary.

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When a controversy breaks out among Christians, it is sometimes denominated a split in the Christian world. Now it often happens that this is not only a split between persons professing one and the same faith, but it is literally a split between parts of one and the same testimony. Each party attaches itself to its own part, and that, as far as it goes, a real part of the testimony of God. So that neither may be wrong in the positive sense which characterizes them, and their only error consists in each denying the sense of the other, when in fact both of them are true. We hold this to have been remarkably exemplified in the different solutions which have

been given of the question—on what grounds am I to believe that I have a personal interest in the salvation of the gospel? One party contend that it is by a direct faith in the truth of the Promiser, who holds forth to all who believe the assurance of this salvation; and the other, that this assurance, instead of entering into the primary or direct act of faith, comes by an act of consciousness, or when a man recognises in his own character those marks or evidences by which he is made to understand that he is growing in a personal meetness for heaven. I happen to think that the truth upon this question is made out by superadding the positive opinion of the one party to the positive opinion of the other, and that the error of both consists mainly in that negative part of the opinion of each, which consists in their denial of what the other asserts, insomuch that the first party would refuse that any hope of heaven could be gathered from the work of self-examination at all; and the second party, again, grounding their whole hope of heaven on the result of this examination, would deny that any such hope could be conceived *instanter* anterior to experience, and by an immediate radiance as it were from the objective truths of Christianity. I think that there is a legitimate hope grounded on each of these foundations; that there is room, without conflict and without interference, for the first hope, which I would call the hope of faith, and, at the same time, the second hope, which I would call the hope of experience.

For the elucidating of my meaning, let me direct your attention to Romans v. 1-4. You will perceive in this passage hope introduced in the train of consequences at two different times. Now the first time I apprehend it to be the hope of faith, the second time the hope of experience.*

Now, instead of saying that we derive all our hope from looking at the object, that is, the truth of the Promiser, or that we derive all our hope from looking at the subject, that is, my own renewed character, is there any conflict or interference in saying that our hope is founded partly upon both? and is it not obvious from the illustrations which we have given, that both

* See Lectures on the Romans.

may harmonize, and that the absence of the one may legitimately darken and extinguish the other. The misfortune of controversy is, that the whole truth is broken into parts by it ; and of this controversy, in particular, we are greatly apprehensive that while, on the one side, in their zeal for the freeness of the gospel they would dispense with all reflex examination into one's own personal state and history, on the other side, in their zeal for the interests of virtue, they may obscure that warrant which the New Testament holds out for an act of immediate confidence on the part of the sinner, who is invited even now to enter into reconciliation, and to set himself securely down under the delightful assurance of God being at peace with him. For this reason, when a controversy does arise in the Church, we think it better, if circumstances admitted, of its being suffered to work itself out in its own effervescence without any public or authoritative notice being taken of it. The thing of which we are most apprehensive is, lest, in opposition to a heretical deliverance, the Church should come forth with a counter-deliverance, as exceptionable on the one side as the error against which it pronounces is exceptionable on the other. In particular, I should ever regret any such interpretation of the matter in dispute, as that which, when asserting the place that belongs to the hope of experience, would refuse a place, and even a precedency to the hope of faith, or would darken the character of the gospel in its being a message of good tidings to the chief of sinners, and in the blessed truth of which the chief of sinners might instantly rejoice.

There is just one thing more which appears necessary at present for completing these observations. I will not refuse that even for the primary act of faith there is necessity for a certain consciousness, insomuch, that without the one the other might be impossible. For example, I do not understand how a man could take peace and joy to himself from the invitation of "Come unto me, and I will give you rest," if conscious within himself that he wanted the will or the purpose to forsake all that the Saviour would have him forsake, seeing it is expressly said, that he who doth come to Him must forsake all. It is

thus that Augustine burst into light and confidence on the moment of the conscious resolution that he would give up all his sinful indulgences. And it is thus when an amnesty is declared to the rebellious on their appearing at a certain place and giving up their arms, the man who feels the purpose within him of going to that place and making the required surrender may *instantly* feel the security of one who is now at peace with the governor whom he had offended. It is not necessary for the purpose of his feeling this immediate confidence that the declaration be one of positive and unconditional pardon—enough if it be the declaration of a pardon upon terms, and he feel within himself the consciousness of acceding to those terms. And in like manner it is not necessary, as a writer of the present day represents it, that there shall be an act of proclaimed and universal pardon from heaven ere any man shall feel a proper warrant for rejoicing in the consciousness of God being at peace with him. Enough that there be the declaration of a universal amnesty upon terms; for let a man believe in the honesty of that declaration, and be conscious of his readiness to acquiesce in those terms, and then may the light of an assured hope enter even now into his heart, and he may go forth on the walk of prescribed obedience with the delightful assurance that his sins are forgiven, and that God is his friend.

BOOK IV.—CHAP. V.

EXTENT OF THE REMEDY.

THE PRAYER.

Do Thou work in us, O God, to will and to do of Thy good pleasure, and may the effect of Thy working in us be, that we work ourselves—working out our salvation with fear and trembling. May we know what it is to strive mightily, according to Thy grace working in us mightily. May the doctrine of Thy blessed Spirit and of His influences not supersede our own labour, but may it stimulate that labour. May it, acting in us, make us active; and may we, combining a spirit of prayer with a spirit of performance, make instant progress in those graces and accomplishments which fit for the Jerusalem above. Be with us now and ever.—Amen.

I cannot but remark it as a strong internal evidence for the truth of sacred history when the various parts of an extended narration hang so well together as to be in perfect good keeping and consistency among themselves. I think if this can be recognised, even in minuter traits and those nicer strokes or delicacies of description, which make it improbable that an inventor should have thought of them, it goes to augment the impression of its being a narrative founded on a natural and a true original. I am not sure if I can appeal for a better instance of this to any other part of the record than that which portrays the gradual transition of mind undergone by the Apostles on the subject of the spiritual nature of Christ's kingdom. At the outset, you perceive in the earlier part of the Gospels, a complete Jewish darkness upon this subject; and this scarcely, if at all, dispersed during the time of our Saviour's sojourn upon earth. The caution and delicacy of our Saviour's management in regard to this topic are strikingly contrasted with the slowness and unwillingness of their belief in it, and with the obstinacy of their misconceptions—an obstinacy certainly that was not dissipated by converse with Jesus Christ during His lifetime, and which stood its ground even

after the death and resurrection of the Saviour. But they not only misapprehended the spiritual character of His kingdom, they also were blind to the universal application of it;—and this latter prejudice was longer persisted in than the former one, not being entirely overthrown till the conversion of Cornelius, or rather till the *exposé* which Peter gave of this transaction to the council at Jerusalem. The contrast between the gradual, and timid, and hesitating character of the apostolical mind on this subject before the fulness of its disclosure, and the bold, intrepid, confident avowals which they made afterwards, together with the fearless way in which they, generally speaking, proceeded upon it, gives a dramatic truth to the whole representation which cannot fail to impress on the mind of the reader the authentic character of the whole story.

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It need scarcely now be a matter of discussion whether Christianity was intended to be a universal religion in the sense that it was addressed to the people of all countries. In the national sense of the term, no one but the Jews themselves doubts of its universality. The important view is, how this matter is to be understood in the individual sense of the term? And here the question resolves itself into two matters, which are distinct from each other—either the universality of the Christian salvation in point of effect, or its universality in point of proposition. In regard to the first of these, the universality in point of effect, there are a certain class who deny such universality, and yet are denominated universalists. For, you will observe, there is a distinction between universality in point of necessary, and universality in point of actual effect. The Arminians, generally speaking, neither admit the universality in point of actual effect, nor yet the non-eternity of hell-torments, and yet there is a sense in which they may be termed universalists. They contend that there is no necessary bar in the way of any man's salvation, more especially no such barrier as that of a Divine decree standing between any man and the achievement by his own efforts of a blissful immortality. And yet they will admit that, in point of fact, many fall short

of eternal blessedness, and, by their own perversity and disregard of the overtures of reconciliation, are landed in everlasting punishment. In reference to the controversy between them and the Calvinists, there is a ground for calling them Universalists, even although they may possibly have views as limited as the latter have in regard to the actual number of those who in very deed and reality shall eventually be saved. Their sense of the term universal does not in fact relate to the eventual, but the possible salvation of all men ; and what they strenuously contend for is, that there is no predestination standing in the way of this possibility.

I shall not have time to go over the topic of Predestination with the same fulness which some of you may recollect that I did last year, and most of you may recollect that I did two years ago ; but still it must be recurred to so far as to furnish me with the principles of a distinct deliverance on the various questions that still lie before us in the text-book ; and I shall only say, that firmly persuaded though I be of that doctrine, on grounds both scriptural and philosophical, and fully as I subscribe to the views and reasonings of President Edwards in his Essay on the Freedom of the Will, I should refrain from the slightest mention of it, if I thought it at all interfered with the universality of the Christian salvation in point of proposition, or if I thought I could not, with as much consistency and as great urgency as any zealous Arminian, beseech, and honestly beseech, every man to repent, and turn, and be saved—if I could not say, in the hearing of an assembled congregation, however indiscriminate and however numerous, that God had fastened a mark of exclusion upon none of them—that He sincerely entreated one and all to wash out their sins in the blood of the satisfying atonement ; nay, swore by Himself, that He had no pleasure in their death, but rather that they should come to Him and live. I take this early opportunity, then, of avowing my conviction, that Calvinist though I be, I hold there is nothing in Calvinism which should lay an arrest on the Christian minister, when he plies with the calls and invitations of the gospel, not the whole congrega-

tion only whom he is addressing, but every individual of that congregation, assuring him specifically, that if he is willing to be saved, God is still more willing to save him, laying before him an open way to heaven, which he is welcome, nay, importunately bidden to walk in; and let him speculate and even murmur about the decrees of God as he may, they are his own stubborn will and his own evil deeds—they are these and nothing else which lie between him and that blissful immortality, the portals of which, with waving flags of invitation, are, by the constitution of the gospel, open to one and all of the human family.

There is one principle which I should like to impress upon you on our entrance into this question. A doctrine may be true, and yet may not be a seasonable truth, which it is expedient or wise in a Christian minister to urge when intent on some given object that belongs to an executive part of his high office. All Scripture is profitable, but profitable for particular ends; at one time for doctrine, at another for correction, at another for reproof, at another for instruction in righteousness. Now, when your aim is one of these ends, it is not a right way of proceeding to ply the people with that doctrine which is appropriately subservient to some other of these ends; and, be assured, that the great part of your skill, as able and discerning ministers of the New Testament, lies in the selection of the fit and specific topics for the specific achievements which you have in view. There is one example, the spirit of which I shall often have occasion to advert to in my lucubrations on the questions that now lie before us. The man who came to the Saviour with the question, "Are there many that be saved?" wanted theological information on a theological subject certainly, and it is truly instructive to observe the entertainment given to this question by our Saviour. He did not give the required information; but He gave what was a great deal better for the man—He gave him directions how he should proceed, in order that he may become one of those saved: "Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able." The spirit which dictated this reply

admits, we think, of abundant application to the matters which lie before us, and we shall frequently advert to those occasions on which it were infinitely better and wiser to put aside a thing of speculative curiosity, and substitute in its place a thing of practical influence and persuasion.

BOOK IV.—CHAP. VI.

PARTICULAR REDEMPTION.

THE PRAYER.

WE rejoice, O God, in the fulness of that revelation which Thou hast given to the world. May all the wealth and all the wisdom of it be ours. Save us, while engaged in the study of it, from our own imaginations. Give us to sit, with the docility of children, to the lessons and the informations which are there laid before us; and make us to feel that, when God speaks, it is the part of man to listen, and to believe, and to obey. Through Thy word may we become wise to salvation—through Thy word may we become perfect, and thoroughly furnished to all good works.

This seems the proper place for the introduction of a question, whereof it is greatly to be lamented that the necessity should have occurred for its ever being raised at all, as a topic of speculation. The question relates to the amount or value of the sufferings of Christ. It proceeds on an arithmetical view of the ransom which He paid for sin, and hinges on the consideration whether it was equivalent, looking at it in the character of a price, or a purchase-money—whether it was equivalent to the salvation of all men, or only to the salvation of that limited number who pass under the denomination of the elect. I have ever felt this to be a distasteful contemplation, and my repugnance, I feel no doubt, has been greatly aggravated by my fears of the danger which might ensue to practical Christianity, from the injudicious applications that might be made of it, especially in the work of the pulpit, and when urging

hearers to accept of the offered reconciliation of the gospel. It is always to be dreaded, and if possible shunned, when a transcendental question, relating to the transactions of the upper sanctuary, or to the part which God has in our salvation, should be so treated, or take such a direction as to cast obscurity over, or at all threaten to embarrass, the part which man has in it. There may not merely be an intruding into things unseen, when thus scrutinizing into the agreement or terms of the bargain, as it were, between the offended Lawgiver and the Mediator, who had undertaken to render satisfaction for the outrage inflicted on the authority of His government ; but the argument might be so conducted as to mislead and perplex the heralds of salvation in the execution of their plainly bidden task—which is, to go and “command all men everywhere to repent”—to “go and preach the gospel to every creature.”

It is not that I am prepared to condemn the admission of this subject as an article into the Confessions of Reformed Christendom. You have heard my repeated explanations of the origin of Confessions, and their gradual extension to the magnitude which they have now attained. Had it not been for the perversions of heresy, they would never have been called for ; and, in the present instance, had it not been for the dogma of those who contended for the final salvation of all men, we might never have heard of any counter-dogma, in the precise form and designation of particular redemption. It is not that by the article of a confession, we superinduce anything new upon the Bible, or make any addition to the things which are contained in this book. Every article has, or ought to have, a Scriptural basis, and is in fact a proposition constructed on the sayings of Scripture ; or, more identical still, it is but the translation of these sayings from one language to another—from the language, if you will, of the temple to that of the academy—the one used for the instruction of worshippers and practical disciples ; the other used for the correction of scholastic or sophistical gainsayers. The great evil to be apprehended is that which might arise from the confounding of these two offices. We have no quarrel with the truth of the article, and indeed

look upon it as the legitimate consequence of certain other doctrines regarded systematically and comprehensively in their bearings on each other, and to which doctrines both human philosophy and the word of God lend their concurrent attestation. If by particular redemption it be meant that Christ so died for men, as that the salvation obtained by His death only took effect on a particular number, this we cannot question ; but if it be meant by particular redemption that the salvation may not be made the subject of a universal proclamation, may not be tendered honestly, while urgently tendered, to all men, or severally and individually to each of them, this we promptly and indignantly deny, resenting it as we would any mutilation of the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is because these two propositions are so apt to be confounded that we do feel a sort of sensitive antipathy, the dread of a great practical evil, on the mention of either of them. And then what daring as well as distasteful language is often employed by the defenders of the orthodox proposition. Even when I consent to their doctrine, I abominate some of their arguments. I cannot bear this great and solemn transaction, the decease that was accomplished in Jerusalem, to be spoken of in the terms of a mercantile negotiation between the Father and the Son. I think they transgress the limits of a becoming and reverential silence when they assign a precise arithmetical value to the blood that was shed, and then tell us that this must only form a commensurate price, or a commensurate expiation; for the guilt of those who were saved actually, else there must have been a superfluous expense of suffering—the injustice, as it were, of laying more upon Christ than He obtained a return for as the fruit of the travail of His soul. This whole nomenclature of the market and the counting-house I utterly dislike ; and my repugnance thereto is not the less violent, that it bears the character of a presumptuous and intermeddling speculation. I should feel it a most unwarrantable inroad on a region too high for us did we attempt to reason on the matters contained in the book of life. And really, if I may say it without irreverence, judging from the style of certain theologians on this topic, they seem to me

as if they could scarce have spoken otherwise though they had access to a ledger-book kept in the upper sanctuary, and where the worth of the ransom, or amount of the redemption-money, and number of the redeemed, had been set off as equivalents against each other. It is monstrously revolting to my ears, when I hear certain statements, almost in the form of calculation, respecting the blood of the atonement, as if it were computable and divisible like purchase-money, as the price paid and told out, under the old economy, in shekels, for the redemption of the souls of the children of Israel. The simple majesty of the truth as propounded in Scripture has often undergone sad desecration at the hands, I will not say of merely unphilosophical, but of most unsavoury and untasteful theologians, whose speculations on this subject are often absolutely hideous. Enough for us to learn the terms of the New Covenant viewed as a covenant between God and man. We step beyond our province when we presume to inquire into the terms or overlook the accounts of this great transaction, viewed in the light of a covenant between the Father and the Son.

But it is not merely because of the offence done by it to the true Christian philosophy that we deprecate many of the views which have been given, and many of the expressions which have been uttered by theologians in their treatment of this question. A still more serious calamity is the practical disturbance which it has given to the work of the pulpit, as well as the initial perplexities which it has thrown across the path of the inquirer at the outset of his religious earnestness. I have heard my deceased friend, Robert Hall, say of the great majority of evangelical preachers in England, that they were so encumbered with the dogmata of their creed, as positively not to know in what terms so to lay down the gospel as that a plain man should know how to take it up. And this dogma of particular redemption, ill understood, forms the main cause of their embarrassment. If Christ died not for all, how can I make a tender of His salvation to all? If He died only for the elect, in what terms can I declare the readiness of God to take into acceptance the multitude before me? How can I represent

Him as waiting to be gracious, if, in the exercise of a discriminating grace, He has purposes of mercy only for certain some who are unknown to me, while He has no such purpose for certain others, who are alike unknown to me? In these circumstances, it would appear as if I could neither single out those to whom I might deliver the overtures of reconciliation, nor am I free to cast these overtures abroad in the hearing of all the people. It is thus that clergymen, manacled and wire-bound in the fetters of their wretched orthodoxy, feel themselves impeded and restrained in the exercise of their functions as the heralds of mercy to a guilty world. They know not to whom they should deliver the message, or from whom they should withhold it, and are uncertain of the very first footstep they should take in prosecution of the work which has been given them to do. They cannot properly limit their proposals to the elect, for they do not know them; and, after all, this is not the proposal where-with they have been charged, which is, to preach the gospel to every creature under heaven, to call on all men everywhere to repent and turn unto God, and do works meet for repentance.

Now this is a sore evil; and is fitted, if any thing, to spoil the gospel, or rather the declaration of the gospel, of all its efficacy. Yet to make this declaration, and to make it freely or without exception to all, is one of the plainest injunctions in the New Testament. What then ought to be the inference, but that this doctrine of particular redemption is either not a doctrine at all, or is grievously misunderstood—if in virtue thereof, a minister feels himself restrained from making the open proclamation of its offered forgiveness to all within his reach, or from beseeching every man to enter through Jesus Christ into peace and fellowship with the Lawgiver whom he had offended.

Now, which term of this alternative do we take—whether that Particular Redemption is not a doctrine, or that it is grievously misunderstood? We take the latter term. It is a doctrine, but a doctrine sadly misunderstood and misapplied. We shall endeavour to demonstrate the former; that is, exhibit the proof for the doctrine through the medium of the text—

book, and by our commentary on its various lessons. We shall endeavour to evince the latter ; that is, expose, and if possible rectify, the abuse which has been made of the doctrine, in our Supplementary Lectures. And this, by the way, is perhaps the most palpable exemplification which occurs of the respective departments in our course—when the main and direct lesson is often given in our colloquial treatment of the class-book, and the illustrations or corollaries of the lesson are as often given in original preparations of our own. I wish by this remark to impress on you the great importance of your own private studies on the successive chapters of Dr. Hill, as well as to assure you that I lay fully as great a stress on the frequent and lengthened notes which I append to various of its passages, as on the more elaborate compositions of my own, by which the three first days of our week are occupied. There will be a great failure in the object of your attendance here, there will be the foregoing of a principal benefit, if you pass over carelessly or superficially the work of its two last days—whether by a laxer attention to what is then delivered from the Chair, or by the remissness of your own preparatory readings at home.

But while thus stating what I hold in the general to be the relative importance of the two great co-ordinate branches of our course, let me at the same time state, that in regard to the particular doctrine before us, as well as to the rest in order—I mean the doctrine of Predestination, I think it of fully greater necessity to guard against their abuses than even to establish their truth. When viewed in relation to God, these doctrines, if prosecuted beyond a certain limit, become transcendental mysteries, and speedily pass into the description of matters too high for us. When viewed in relation to man, they have their uses no doubt, for who can question that all scripture is profitable—but a deadly mischief has often arisen from the perversions which have been made of them. To ward off the mischief which has arisen from these doctrines, I hold to be a service of greater practical value than even to come forth with their evidences and their claims to be admitted into the theological

system as articles of our creed. There is at the same time one difference in our treatment of these two dogmata. For the proofs of the first, Particular Redemption, we refer you chiefly to the text-book, while we reserve to ourselves the exposure, and I hope rectification, of the practical errors which have sprung from it. In our treatment of the second, again, or of Predestination, we shall bestow more of direct labour on it in our own person, both on the establishment of it as a theory, and when viewing it in connexion with the interests of practical religion.

But returning now to our topic of Particular Redemption, let us proceed on the altogether sound and safe principle of Bishop Butler, that it is our true wisdom to attend more to the part which man has in any question, than to speculate on the part which God has in it. In reference to God, we cannot refuse in the face both of Scripture and reason, that known to Him are all things from the beginning; nay, further, as we shall afterwards demonstrate, that by Him all things are not only foreseen but determined—and more especially the final number of those who shall be saved. These are undoubted premises, yet I would forbear to ground thereupon the arithmetic of our Particular Redemptionists. The truth is, that save for the purpose of framing a counter-proposition to meet some heresy capable of being turned to a practically mischievous application, I should feel disinclined for any further prosecution of the question, at least on this side of it. I would abstain from any numerical consideration of the value of Christ's sufferings, nor entertain the difficulty whether they were equivalent for the salvation of all, or only of the elect? This is a matter which belongs rather to the transaction between the Surety and the Lawgiver—a supernal or transcendental theme, therefore, and which, as lying in that direction, it is both our philosophy and our piety not to intrude into. It is our part to look in the other direction, to view it as a question between God and man, or rather as a question between God and each man individually: and it is thus, that in every case of real practical earnestness, the question is generally entertained.

We read that Christ died for the world ; but did He die for me in particular? Is the foundation laid in Zion by His atoning death, a foundation broad enough for me to rest upon? Are the overtures of reconciliation that have come from heaven such as I can entertain in the form of overtures addressed to myself? How can I so take them up, after being told that Christ died only for some ; and it is nowhere said that I am included in the happy number? The perplexity felt by a minister in the pulpit as to the terms in which he should propose the message of reconciliation, is the very perplexity felt by the individual hearer as to the terms in which he should receive it. It is thus that the trumpet has been made to blow uncertainly ; and that many a spirit, mystified and bewildered among the difficulties of a theme too high for it, has been unable to grope its way to a place of enlargement and safety.

We see no other method of resolving the perplexity than just by disentangling the celestial from the terrestrial of this whole speculation, and, foregoing all curiosity about the part which God has in it, to look singly and intently on the part which man has in it. If salvation be not destined for all, of this at least we may be very sure, that salvation is proposed to all. If Christ did not so far die for me, as that He is yet mine in possession, He at least so far died for me, as that He is mine in offer. This is truly the matter on hand ; this is the word nigh unto us. I cannot run the speculation upward to the heights of the past eternity, nor onward to the depths of the future everlasting. But with neither have I at present or practically to do. The thing immediately before me—the only thing I am called at this moment to entertain—is the invitation of the gospel, which invitation, I, as minister, have the full warrant to throw abroad without limitation or reserve among all and every of an assembled congregation ; and they, as hearers, have each individually for himself as full a warrant to close with and confidently to appropriate as an invitation to him in particular. He may not be able to reconcile the absolute with the relative in this question—the whole and just perspective thereof as seen from the point of view in heaven, with the

partial, though, as far as it goes, the equally just perspective thereof, as seen from the point of view on earth—the wide and general contemplation taken of it by God above, who looks from beginning to end, from one extreme to the other of the scheme universal, with the lower and limited contemplation taken of it by man below, who may cast a far and wildering look on both sides of him, yet can see no further into the scheme than to the brief evolution of it in his own little day—the ephemeral and intermediate passage whereupon his own history is cast, and wherewith he himself is closely and immediately implicated. And it were his wisdom to be satisfied with thus seeing—it were truly his wisdom to recall himself from the distant to the near—from gazing on the infinite, behind and before him, to the besetting realities of his present condition—to the urgency and plain meaning of present calls. His business is not with the counsels which were fixed upon before the world, nor yet with the consummations which take place after it; his business is not even with the matter as it respects the species, but with the matter as it respects himself. He may not be able to adjust all the parts of the complete and comprehensive whole; but enough if he is able to discern his own part in it, and rightly to proceed thereupon. Let all the perplexities of the general speculation be what they may, they affect not what to himself should be the weightiest and yet the most applicable of all truths—that God is beseeching him to be reconciled—that in reference to him, God is waiting to be gracious—that He is now plying him with the offers and entreaties of the gospel, saying, Come now, let us reason together; and, Turn thee, turn thee, for why shouldst thou die? This is the topic for the minister to preach, and for the people to listen to; this is the revealed thing which belongs to them and to their children; this is the right demonstration to make from the pulpit, extricated and set free from the demonstrations of an ambitious philosophy. It is the sounder and better philosophy which keeps a man within his own sphere, and leads him to take the part which the great Artificer and Governor of all has specially assigned to him. His business is to look

to himself : his concern is not with the scheme universal, or that part of it which is out of sight in heaven, but with that part of it which, brought nigh to him on earth, is made to bear on the fears and the feelings of his own heart, or on the urgent interests of his own little home—the question, so often exemplified at the first promulgation of the good tidings, What shall I do, that I and those of my household might be saved ? The materials, most ample and satisfying materials, for the solution of this question, are within the reach of every man who himself is within reach of the Bible. He needs only attend to its plain lessons, and forego his own adventurous and most unfruitful speculations. Instead of roaming over the wide expanse in pursuit of the distant and the indeterminate, he has only to busy himself with the distinct and definite matters which are brought to his own door. The some who are ordained to eternal life—the sheep out of all the species, for whom Christ died—the elect for whom the Lamb was slain before the foundation of the world ; it is his part to recall himself from the perplexity of his spirit upon these, and turn him to the sayings which serve for the guidance of his own footsteps : “ Repent, and be converted every one of you.” Let whosoever believe, and he shall not perish. God is not willing that any should go into perdition ; He beseeches every man ; He willeth all to repent ; He willeth all to come to the knowledge of the truth, and be saved.

The things of the spiritual are often illustrated by correspondent things of the natural or the material economy. Did we look only to our world as a planet, as the member of a great and gorgeous universe, and more especially to the vast rapidity of its movement in space, we might well tremble for the safety of its tiny inhabitants, and wonder how it is that our earth can take a part in these larger evolutions of the firmament, and yet the people who live in it can walk without disturbance as on a stable platform, and keep their footing upon its surface. We know what the physical laws are which reconcile this seeming incongruity, and in virtue of which it is that man, though placed and borne along in the vortex of immensity, can prose-

cute his homely and familiar goings with as great security as if all were at rest. And even though we had not known, and our philosophy been inadequate for the explanation, the same would have been our experience, and the same wondrous harmony between the absolute and the relative would still have been realized. Now, what is true of the cycles in the heavens, is alike true of the cycles of eternity. There is a transcendental theology which labours to sever them, and to adjust all seeming discrepancies between the incumbent part which belongs to man upon the one hand, and on the other the sublime mysteries of all the foreknowledge and all the pre-ordination on high. Whether it may succeed or it may fail in this daring enterprise, let us never forget that there is a patent and practicable way for the humblest of Zion's wayfarers, who, if they but simply betake themselves to the gospel's bidden walk, will at length make good their entrance on that region of immortal light and blessedness, where they shall know even as they are known.

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I would again revert to this topic with the view of making you clearly understand the distinction between one kind of universality and another—the universality of redemption in point of effect, and its universality in point of proposition. And again, there is a distinction in regard to the first of these—the universality in point of effect, which I beg you will keep in mind. Most of the Arminians agree with all the Calvinists in not allowing the universality in point of actual effect, but they do not agree with the Calvinists in affirming any want of such universality in point of necessary effect. There is an actual limitation, they admit, upon the universality, but no necessary limitation. There stands, they contend, nothing like a fatality in the way of its being universal. In short, they contend that there is no predestination, no antecedent decree upon the subject. They, generally speaking, admit that all historically, or in point of fact, will not be saved; and that, so far from there being an actual universality, the number really and indeed saved will fall greatly short of the whole family of

mankind ; but then they affirm, that what this number shall be is not a matter of predetermination, but a matter of contingency—that it is not determined beforehand by God, but depends on the course that shall be taken by the self-determining power of man, in the exercise of that liberty which, in the metaphysical sense of the term, they most zealously assert for him. On this particular point the Arminians and the Calvinists are at issue ; and there are certain ultra-Calvinists, who understand the limitation of the decree, or the limitation caused by the predestination of God, in such a way as not only to deny the universality of redemption, in the first general sense of the phrase, but to deny it in the second general sense also—that is, they not only deny, *in toto*, the universality of the Christian redemption in point of effect, but they even deny it in point of proposition. In virtue of their notions on the subject of election, they not only believe in the absolute impossibility of the gospel salvation being ever realized by all, but they even feel restrained from proposing it to all. In laying the very first overtures of Christianity before the people, there is often mingled—I think most injudiciously and unwarrantably mingled—a most perplexing reference on their part to the doctrine of election, and often a positive discouragement, amounting in some instances to positive prohibition on the great bulk of the people from entertaining the subject at all, saying, that for aught they know, they may have no part whatever in the matter. I must do my utmost to clear the whole matter of this disturbing and complicating influence ; and meanwhile I satisfy myself with announcing, that I know nothing of more vital importance to the efficacy of your preaching, than your proceeding, as I believe you fully warranted by Scripture, on the free and boundless universality of the gospel salvation in point of proposition, and that you fall short of your commission as the heralds of God's mercy to the children of men, if you ply not, with the assurances and the honest assertions of His goodwill, one and all of the human family.

Before terminating this subject, I should like particularly to make you understand in what respect I agree with the state-

ment of Dr. Whitby, and, in fact, with all that is ascribed in the text-book to universal redemptionists, in the most important, that is in the practical sense, of these affirmations, and how, consistently with this, I hold by the Calvinistic doctrine of an absolute predestination. I should hold it a most grievous effect of that doctrine on your conduct of the business of the pulpit, if you did not address all men as the subjects of the proposed pardon and justification—if you did not assure them of a reconciliation on their turning to God, and having faith in the Lord Jesus Christ—if you did not, for this purpose, urge them so to turn, and expound to them, affectionately as well as fully, the truth as it is in Jesus—if you did not tell them, just as these universal redemptionists do, that their salvation depends on their faith. The remedy, in fact, is much more extensive in proposition than it is in effect. It may be held out, and honestly held out, in proposition, to all, while at the same time, and effectively, it is limited to those who repent and believe, while most assuredly all who do so repent and believe shall be saved. And it is also quite true, that though the offer of redemption were rejected by all, there is a sense in which that redemption might still be called universal. The offer could not have been given without it; and now that Christ hath died, the offer might be made to one and all of the species. The qualification which I want you to lay on certain passages in the text-book, where the tenets and views of the universal redemptionists are explained, is not so to understand it as if there were not Calvinists who did not subscribe, and that most cordially, to much that is there ascribed to them, and I fear so ascribed to them as to give you the impression that the Calvinists stand opposed to the whole of it. You will act the part of unfaithful representatives of the King of heaven; you will have put a sore misrepresentation on the terms of that embassy wherewith He has intrusted you, if you do not make open proclamation of the gospel as a universal offer, and do not make use of this moving argument with one and all of your hearers—that in relation not to some one, but to every one, God is waiting to be gracious.

Those of you who are acquainted with Butler's Analogy know the principle on which he reconciles with the truth of Christianity those phenomena of unequal distribution which have perplexed the views of so many of our speculatists. He attempts no absolute reconciliation, but he makes it conclusively out, that if such inequality is to be held a sufficient reason for dissociating a God from Christianity, then experience and observation furnish like phenomena, which afford us sufficient reason for dissociating a God from nature. This, in fact, is the great principle of his incomparable work, and it is a principle which both Arminians and Calvinists stand equally in need of; neither can promise any positive solution of the difficulty; but it is a difficulty which, if permitted, on its own strength only, to set aside our peculiar speculations, should in all consistency be admitted as a valid objection to any system of religion whatever, and so would land us in a state of Atheism. Both Arminians and Calvinists come at length to an insolvable something, which lies beyond the limit of our comprehension, and it will be found that that something relates to the vindication of the character and ways of God. We do not understand how it is that the creatures of God should be endowed with such an exceeding variety of privileges and gifts, insomuch that some are far more liberally dealt with than others. We only know that so it is, and yet retain our belief in the existence and perfect character of God notwithstanding. When instead of comparing different species of creatures, we limit our view to one species—to our own—we know not why it is that some men should have been so gifted with natural powers and advantages, while others have been doomed to extreme poverty, and, in respect of mental endowment, are born and live in a state of idiotism; still, we know that so it is, and yet, if not Atheists, persist in believing a God, and generally, too, a God whose ways, did we but know all, would be found to admit of full justification. And we do not know wherefore it is that some countries have been visited with the light of the gospel, while others are left to barbarity and paganism; but still the irresistible fact is obtruded upon us, and yet Arminians not-

withstanding retain their confidence in God as a Being who, in the great day of the manifestation of His counsels, will stand forth to the assembled universe as being indeed its righteous and merciful Governor. Finally, we do not know the reason, which is as yet inscrutable, why of two individuals, living in the same country, to all appearance equally gifted with the powers of natural discernment, and sitting under the very same ministration of the truths of Christianity, the one should be taken and the other left—the one should have his convictions overpowered, and his whole nature brought under the transforming and saving influences of the gospel of Christ, while the other persists in the deep lethargy and unconcern of nature. The Calvinist, who believes that it is the grace of God which makes the difference, cannot tell why it is that there should be any such difference at all; but still, though he know not why it is, he is forced to believe that so it is; and with as much reason, we contend, as in any of the former instances, does he hold that, when this inscrutable thing has had the light of the coming manifestation thrown over it, will it be found of all the ways of God that they are righteous and true. On each and all of the systems we are at length landed in an impracticable difficulty; but it is a difficulty which attaches to the procedure of the Divinity, and not a difficulty, you will observe, which attaches to the part that we are called upon to act for the salvation of our own souls; and the wisdom which I chiefly want to impress upon you, in the management of this whole speculation, is that which distinguishes between the things we do know and that will be found to relate to our own conduct, and the things we do not know and that will be found to relate to the high and hidden counsels of the Divinity.

Were I commissioned by an earthly monarch with the overtures of reconciliation to the inhabitants of a province that had risen up in arms against him, and were I authorized by the terms of that commission to hold forth the overtures of pardon, and not of pardon only, but of pardon and preferment to all who should cast away from them the weapons of their rebellion, the line of my duty at least is quite plain. I have but to urge

their acceptance of the offered terms. I have to assure them of the perfect honesty of my master, and the perfect safety wherewith they might place their reliance on him. I may be conceived to have the advantage of being able to appeal to by-gone instances in which their brothers in rebellion had been persuaded by my entreaties to give in, and how they now lived in perfect security, and had been raised to happiness and honour on their compliance with the gracious proposal. With this invitation I would keep plying all who still held out and were obstinate ; and however much I may be at a loss to account for the difference between those who consented to my proposals and those who resisted them, still it would be quite clear that the only way in which I could do a real practical service to those people would be to persevere in that earnest solicitation by which alone I had ever succeeded in gaining the surrender of any, and on which surrender they had never in a single instance failed to obtain the full possession of those blessings which I was authorized to hold out as the sure effect of their compliance.

I might feel myself greatly baffled and at a loss did I attempt to philosophize in a speculative way on the question, How comes it, after all, that two sets of human beings should be so differently constituted as that the first, after perhaps a good deal of resistance, should at length give way under the power of my earnest and repeated assurances, while the second stand their resolute ground, and at length die hard under all the pathos and urgency I can bring to bear upon them ? This might present a dark, perhaps an unresolvable subject to my understanding ; and yet the path of my practical duty might remain perfectly clear and obvious notwithstanding, which is just to persevere in widely circulating and affectionately urging the overtures wherewith I had been intrusted, seeing that it is in the prosecution of this business only that the number of the pardoned is increased, and the number of the impenitent lessened, whether I can comprehend or not the theoretical question which I have started about the difference between them.

It would add greatly to my wonder and perplexity, too, if

in the course of my inquiries into the cause of this difference, I had learned that the very king whose ambassador I was, possessed a before unheard of power to work a receptive disposition in certain of these rebellious subjects, while he left others to the native obstinacy of their own rigid and uncomplying tempers, and that in point of fact it was he who gave this disposition to those who did accept of my published overtures, while he withheld it from others. His policy—wherewith, however, I had nothing to do—would present itself to my notice as a profound mystery ; yet my practice, wherewith I had everything to do, would remain on precisely the same footing as before. It would still be as much my duty as ever to knock at the door of every heart, seeing that it was only by my thus knocking that the door of any heart was opened to my terms of reconciliation. It matters not on what cause, known or unknown, the difference depended between those that withstood my application and those that gave way to it. It affects not the line of my incumbent duty as the herald of those overtures in the least, though I should come to know that it depended on the will and power of him from whom I had received the charge of them. It might throw a deeper shade over his counsels, and make them all more incomprehensible than ever. The duty of plying men with these overtures would still remain. After this new discovery of the principle on which the success depended, the measure of the success might still remain the same, and the encouragement founded on the experience of this also remain. In short, there may be much in this doctrine to aggravate my speculative difficulties ; but the way of duty, and the motive to the performance of it, are just what they used to be.

But a further information may be presented on this subject. I may be made to know that this same sovereign gave a disposition to receive his overtures on a proper request being sent to him to that effect, whether from myself, the herald of his merciful proclamation, or from those who were the objects of it. There would be nothing in this to alleviate the mysteriousness of the whole procedure, perhaps rather to enhance it ; but still the

part I had to perform in it would be perfectly clear and obvious. I might not understand how to reconcile the merciful character and universal terms of his proclamation, with the partial exercise of his power in giving a disposition to receive it only to some and not to others of his rebellious subjects. This may be a great deep altogether beyond the reach of my soundings; yet, with all the difficulty in theorizing on his conduct, there needs not rest the shadow of a doubt on what the incumbent footsteps are of my own conduct, which would just be to ply the people among whom I had been sent with the most importunate entreaties to return to the sovereign who sitteth with open arms to receive them, and to ply my sovereign who had sent me with my importunate requests that he would speed the success of my message among a people made willing by him in the day of his power. And if my uniform, nay unexcepted, experience should be, that never did a single creature return in the terms of the amnesty whereof I was the bearer, but, in spite of his bitter provocations, he had all its promises and all its immunities made out to him; and did I also experience that never did the request for a willing heart, if only preferred without any mixture of dishonesty or any misgiving of distrust, that never was such a request sent without the plenteous effusion of a right and a relenting spirit on him who was the object of it—surely all that is palpable in these transactions might well bespeak him to be a merciful, while they are only those recondite things wherewith my conduct and my practice have nothing to do, which bespeak him to be a mysterious sovereign.

Now it is just so with the overtures of the gospel. We have a warrant from the King of heaven for placing them at the door and plying with them the heart and conscience of every individual. We have a further warrant to pray for a blessing on our endeavours; and He tells us that a believing prayer for this will be effectual, descending so far, in fact, as to ask that we should put Him to the proof: Only prove me, and see whether I will not pour out a blessing upon you. It is a mysterious thing that all hearts should not be overpowered by the

touching and tender demonstrations of the upper sanctuary. It is a still more mysterious thing that He who constructed overtures which are addressed to all, should only give the susceptibility of being impressed by them to some. It alleviates not, perhaps it enhances, the mysteriousness, that He should profess a readiness to give a clean heart and a right spirit to those who ask them—for these I must be inquired after. Still it is but a mysteriousness resting on His counsels, for all is noon-day light and simplicity in regard to our conduct, whether it be the conduct of Christian ministers or of Christian individuals. None who accept of these gospel overtures will be disappointed; and none who pray for the power of accepting them, if they do it honestly and in good faith, will have that power withheld from them. The salvation of the gospel is free to all who will, and the overtures of it may be addressed with perfect sincerity to one and all of the human family.

I have not yet broken ground on the main question, but I want to possess you at the very outset with what the conclusion is which I want to establish—Predestinarian though I be, it is not so much the dogma of Predestination as the innocence of the dogma that I want to establish. I further hope to vindicate in some degree its usefulness; but my main object is to satisfy you that it interferes not with the universality of gospel calls and gospel invitations.

On entering upon this topic, I cannot but express my regret that the question between universal and particular redemption should ever have been stirred. I do not think that the interests of truth or the maintenance of essential orthodoxy required it. The controversy, I think, has assumed an unfortunate shape when stated in the terms, whether Christ died for all men, or only for those who shall finally be saved. I regret that these two terms should have been put together in this alternative method, as if the affirmation of the one necessarily involved in it the denial of the other. There is a sense in which Christ died for all men—by His death He brought in an everlasting righteousness, which, in the *ipsissima verba* of Scripture, is unto all and upon all who believe; and our business

is to urge this gospel on the acceptance of one and all. This is true; and yet it is just as true that none but they who believe shall finally be saved. This is all I should feel inclined to state on the head of this particular controversy; and then, were there a disposition to stir the question in another shape, and to inquire whence the difference in point of phenomenon—of mental phenomenon—between those who believe and those who believed not, might not this difference be ascribed to the power and pre-ordination of Him who hath the hearts of all men in His hand? I would enter on this special track of investigation, and proceed in it as far as the light of nature and the light of revelation could carry me. We think that all which is essentially Calvinistic might be established in this way; while, at the same time, when we had got to the impossible difficulties of the question, we think that a man of a wise and philosophic spirit could not fail to perceive that, after all, this greatly maligned and misunderstood Calvinism left the urgencies, and the duties, and all the plain and popular and practical bearings of the religion of Jesus on the souls and consciences of all men on the very footing in which it found them.

In regard to the particular shape of the question between universal and particular redemption, I think there is great sagacity and soundness in the following extracts from Douglas' *Truths of Religion*, p. 231:—

“We must, however, be careful to take our notions of the divine nature and infinite extent of the atonement of Christ from the oracles of God, not from the writings of men who lower every subject which they treat to their own limited views. In the substitution of the innocent for the guilty, and in the transference of merits and demerits, the most obvious and frequent illustrations in Scripture are derived from the transference of debt, and the terms are borrowed from pecuniary transactions. But illustrations in Scripture unfortunately are frequently mistaken for facts, and divines, taking the metaphorical phrase literally, have reasoned as if sin and debt were in all respects convertible terms; and as money is divisible into pounds, shillings, and pence, so merit and demerit might, it is

conceived, be divided into equivalent and corresponding parts ; and one great division among Christians is in a considerable degree owing to the high question whether Christ paid the penalty for the sins only of those that are saved, or whether, in addition to this, He paid the penalty for the sins of those who are lost. But the difficulty and the view that led to it are alike imaginary, and have no foundation in Scripture or in reason. That guilt is not exhausted by application and imputation, we have too evident proofs among the numerous descendants of Adam ; for should the world continue to an undefined number of ages, never would the descendants of the first man cease to be implicated in Adam's fall on account of the numbers who had previously partaken of his guilt and of his nature. Adam broke God's law, all those who are connected with him as their federal head are accounted transgressors also ; the question is here not of numbers, but simply of connexion. Christ fulfilled the law, those who are united to Him by faith are accounted to have fulfilled the law also. Again the question is not of numbers, but simply of connexion.

“ Yet even were it otherwise, and if guilt or merit were exhaustible by imputation, the infinite merit and ‘ riches of Christ,’ in every way ‘ inexhaustible,’ might have precluded the rise of so foolish and unscriptural a dispute, as that which debates whether Christ died for all, or only for the elect.”

While I have this work in hand, I cannot resist the temptation of presenting you with another extract from it, though on another subject. You may be aware of the liberties which are now taking with the Christian doctrine of the atonement, and how this manifestation of the divine love to men is so generalized in the phraseology of some recent writers as to throw a gloss over the whole character of this transaction viewed as a substitution of the innocent for the guilty, by which substitution our sins have been laid to the account of the Saviour who died for them, and His righteousness has been laid to our account who believe in Him. Mr. Douglas' deliverance on this question, too, is equally wise and scriptural with his former one :—

“ There are other writers who, without proceeding to these

lengths of impiety, consider the atonement merely as an example and exhibition of divine love towards mankind. That God in Himself has no need of reconciliation to sinners, that He has no attribute of justice to appease, for that justice is not an original attribute, that it is merely a modification of His benevolence, seeking to produce the greatest results of happiness by maintaining the order which is most conducive to its attainment. That it is sin which makes the sinner groundlessly imagine that God is his enemy, while the truth is, (if he would but recognise it,) that God is always his friend, whether he sins or not, and that, therefore, God (the impiety of the supposition is theirs, not mine) has conducted a sort of sacred drama in giving up His Son to death, that they may see by so high an example, in spite of all that conscience tells them to the contrary, how infinitely God still loves them, however sinful they may be, and without any reference to the imputation by faith of the righteousness of Christ. All such sickly and unscriptural fancies proceed from a want of that deep conviction of sin, that awful sense of the holiness and justice of God, which is so eminent in the sacred writers. Mere reasoning or disputing can have small effect in such cases; it is only when the Spirit is poured out abundantly from on high, when the sinner beholds the wrath of God revealed against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, and when he hears by faith the Saviour exclaiming, 'If it be possible let this cup pass from me,' that he will perceive that sin is a bar to reconciliation on the part of God far more than on the part of the sinner, and that divine and eternal justice is an inseparable attribute of the all-perfect Being. The more we are taught by the Holy Spirit the more we shall discern of the holiness of God, and of the hatefulness of sin in His sight, and of the absolute necessity of the atonement, in order that infinite love might redeem a lost race from eternal destruction. But now that the atonement is made, and that God has not withheld His only begotten Son, we may rejoice that all walls of separation are thrown down, that the veil is rent in twain, and that God, when we believe in the Lord Jesus, is our Father and our Friend for ever."—P. 238.

In short, you will find this book to be a repository of precious things, and though the absence of lengthened reasoning and of sustained illustration may have deducted from its interest, yet, generally speaking, as a collection of sound deliverances on the most important topics in theology, and those often couched in expressions of original felicity and power, I have very great pleasure in recommending it to general perusal.

BOOK IV.—CHAP. VII.

OPINIONS CONCERNING PREDESTINATION.

THE PRAYER.

WE lament before Thee, O God, our innumerable defections in heart and in history from Thy divine law. We feel our daily need of recourse to a Saviour that we may be forgiven, and to a Sanctifier that we may be strengthened for the work of obedience. By nature we are averse to Thy pure and holy commandment. Do Thou put it in our hearts, do Thou write it in our minds, do Thou enlist our taste and our affections on the side of obedience, that our duty may be our delight, and that all our services may be the services of willingness.

It does not appear to me a sufficient argument at all mentioned by Clarke, and apparently with approbation by Dr. Hill,* for the possible foreknowledge of contingent events, that the foreknowledge has no causal influence giving a determinate certainty to that event which is the object of it. We are quite aware that it is not the proximate cause, and may not, in fact, be the remote cause, or cause at all, of the event; but that appears nothing to the purpose, for it at least indicates that that event and no other can happen at the place and time when and where it is known beforehand that it will take place.

Edwards on this part of the argument is triumphantly superior to Dr. Clarke and all the Arminians.

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* Hill, vol. ii. pp. 26, 27.

You will now perceive, that after speculation is carried to a certain extent we come in contact with difficulties whatever our religious system may be. They are not peculiar to Calvinism, and they all more or less are connected with that most unresolvable of all questions, the existence and the origin of evil. We venture to affirm that this is a question equally graveling to Socinians, Arminians, and Calvinists; and that on the subject now before us, we are presented with a specimen not merely of a difficulty to which the Arminian system has introduced us, but what appears still more condemnatory of its truth, a positive contradiction. To say of foreknowledge that it can extend to contingencies, is just to say of an event that it may be certainly known it is to exist, and yet that it is uncertain whether it will exist or not. There is something worse than mysticism in this, there is clear and evident absurdity, though the only conclusion I would have you to deduce from it at present is, that if a system of opinions is to be rejected because of certain unexplained and inexplicable things which it involves, then on the highest of subjects, and more especially on the high subjects of religion, we can have no system of opinions at all.

You will remember the observations of last session on the causes which have led in the history of the Church and of its controversies, to the multiplication of articles in the creed of the orthodox, and more especially how it is that these articles are sometimes, in respect of substance, of a more speculative character than a mere practical expounder of Christian truth would be led to entertain, and in respect of phraseology are couched in terms not to be found in Scripture. The truth is, that the Church was not the originator of such articles.

I would have you to apply these observations to the question before us. Had no Socinian and no Arminian speculation been obtruded on the Church, there might have been no call for any counteractive article upon the subject, and ministers would have acquitted themselves of all they owed to the doctrine of God's absolute sovereignty, by expatiating, in the first place, which they could have done directly and textually from many

passages of Scripture, on man's total inability of himself either to understand aright or to do aright in the matter of his own salvation ; and in the second place, that it is God, by His free and sovereign Spirit, who works in us to will and to do ; but, in the third place, that this Spirit is the most welcome and accessible of all privileges, and is made by the very terms of the gospel as free to all who desire and ask it as the cheap and common bounties of nature : if an earthly father giveth bread to his hungry and imploring children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him ? The effect of such a pastoral treatment as this on the part of a minister is not most assuredly to discharge the people who are under him from the obligations of a most active and strenuous performance, but to make them combine with the habit of performance the habit of prayer. It is not to annihilate their part and office as workers in the business of religion ; but by making them join dependence on God with diligence in themselves, it is in fact to make them fellow-workers with God. It is not to relax their vigilance and their vigour amid the difficulties of the Christian warfare, but it is to set them on a field of discipline and duty with that best security for a triumphant issue, that they have derived strength from the upper sanctuary for all the toils and struggles of their new obedience. It is thus that practical Christianity is made to prosper in many a parish where, under the wise ministrations of a pious and orthodox clergyman, the church of the favoured district is still thronged with earnest worshippers on the Sabbath, and through the week the voice of psalms is still heard in many of our cottages. But when a wrong dogma arises, that if admitted and circulated would not merely change the theoretic views of the people, but greatly worse than this, would relax that practical habit or attitude in which they go about the work of personal Christianity—if either a Socinian speculation were to undermine their faith in the omniscience of God, or a Socinian and Arminian speculation together were to weaken their dependence on that grace which is withheld from the proud and given only to the humble—were the senti-

ment of a self-sufficiency in man to withdraw their fellowship from Him without whom they can do nothing, but through whom, strengthening them, they are enabled to do all things—then both soundness in the faith and success in the practice of religion are alike endangered, and the Church is called to lift her protest against the withering invasion, or, in other words, to frame her article, and call on the most erudite of her sons both to establish and defend it. It is thus that to meet all the exigencies of the Church of Christ upon earth, a polemic theology as well as a pastoral theology is called for ; and all I want is, that you do not confound the respective functions of the two, but that, while the polemic is engaged in the thickest of that controversy that is going on without, you should, within the vineyard and in discharging the business of the pulpit, continue to manage the work of the pastoral theology very much as before. The counter-assertion of the Calvinists against that of the Arminians or Socinians, is not the very assertion of the God who spake to us from heaven. It is not God speaking to us, but it is man speaking his sense or his understanding of what God hath spoken. The just sense and the just understanding it may be, and most important that it should be rendered into an article, where it serves the purpose of a signal as to what we conceive to be true, and a standard against what we conceive to be false. Meanwhile, it is very possible that in a system of wise and judicious parochial ministrations the controversy may be wholly unknown, and any reference thereto may be wholly uncalled for. You may just proceed on your clerical work precisely as you would have done though neither Arminian nor Socinian heresies had ever called away your attention from the word of God. The business of expounding and enforcing Scripture may go on most prosperously, although the dogmata of the Arminians and Socinians, and even the counter-dogma, as stated in the language of Calvinism, were never heard of, and your people, trained to the sentiment that they cannot think too humbly of themselves or too highly and dependingly of God, may be translating the Christianity of the New Testament into their own characters and hearts, and leav-

ing the great doctors in theology to settle their own general questions just as they may.

But there is another and greatly worse effect that an ill-understood polemical has over the pastoral theology, and that is when the general deliverance of Calvinism now before us lays any arrestment on the preacher, so as to impede the perfect openness and freedom wherewith he would hold forth the gift of pardon and eternal life to the acceptance of all men. This you will perceive is a wholly different thing from that of making the assertion that all men are actually pardoned. To declare of any of the benefits of the gospel that they belong to all men in actual property and possession, is a very different thing indeed from preaching the gospel to all men, and calling for their compliance with it. The former is in glaring opposition to the whole truth and tenor of Scripture ; the latter is the very essence of gospel preaching—and we affirm of this essence, that it is destroyed, if, on the imagination of any difference whatever between the elect and other men, you make a difference between one class and another when addressing to them the first overtures of the gospel. The gospel stands forth, in its character of freeness, not to a certain species of men to the exclusion of others, but it stands forth in this character generally to man ; and when the remission of sins, through the propitiation of Christ, is set forth, the proposition is couched in such general terms as the world or sinners—or lastly, than which nothing can be imagined more abstractly and comprehensively general, the pronoun *they* who believe shall be saved ; *he* who calleth on the name of the Lord shall be saved ; *who-soever* cometh shall not be cast out. There is scarcely, in fact, a term in language which has the power of reaching to every individual of the species which is not employed in setting forth the overtures of the New Testament : “ Every one that asketh, receiveth ;” “ Look to me, all ye ends of the earth, and be saved ;” “ Behold, I stand at the door and knock ; if any man open, I will come in to him, and will sup with him ;”—and we conclude, therefore, that a minister sadly mistakes what that is which he is practically to do in the capacity of an ambassador

or a herald, if he suffer his ill-understood and his worse applied system to vitiate the commission wherewith he is charged, or spoil it of those open characters of grace and benignity which belong to it.

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Any difference in point of final result between one man and another, whether that difference be foreseen and preordained or not, should make no difference in the initial treatment which both should receive from the ministers of Christianity. They are alike objects of the same message, and should have that message addressed to them in the very same way. There is an awful distinction in the ends of the two men, but there ought to be no distinction made at the commencement. There is nothing in the decree which overbears their being affectionately, nay honestly urged on the subject of their salvation; for if the one shall indeed be saved, the decree which respected him is carried into effect by his own acceptance of the gospel message; if the other shall indeed be lost, the decree which respected him is carried into effect by his own wilful rejection of the kindness that was pressed upon him, and which, if he had received, would have had upon him its free and full accomplishment.

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There is one observation which I think of capital importance, though I have not seen it mentioned as vindicating the Calvinistic view from the charge of its making God a being not moved by the love of righteousness in His ordinations, but making these ordinations irrespective of character. This charge is grounded on the way in which the matter is put by Calvinistic theologians when they say, that God chose some to everlasting life, not in respect of any righteousness which He saw in them, but of His own sovereign pleasure; giving the impression, therefore, that in that pleasure the love of righteousness and the hatred of iniquity do not enter. Now, it should continually be kept in mind that the ordination, when rightly understood, is not the ordination of an individual and ultimate event, but the ordination of a process, and that in this process the two

terms of righteousness and everlasting life stand indissolubly connected. A being who waits, as the Arminians would represent Him, till the creature hath manifested a righteousness of character, and then translates him into heaven, as possessed of a befitting character for its exercises and joys, really gives no higher demonstration of his love for righteousness than the being who is conceived to overrule the whole history of his moral empire, but so overrules it that holiness and happiness, that righteousness and heaven, shall stand inseparably conjoined the one with the other.

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I have no doubt that the explanation* offered by Molina, of there being a *scientia media*, has been satisfactory to many, not however because any distinct matter was presented to their notice, but because of a certain shadowy imagination that the innovation of the mere term had the effect of conjuring up. There is a mighty imposition in nomenclature; and just as Charles Fox said of a very ordinary speaker in parliament, who, at the same time, had all the semblance which accent and manner could give of impressive oratory, that he spoke to the tune of a good speech, so it may be said of many a reasoning couched in scholastic phrase, and ushered in with all the forms of definition and dialectics, that it is at least to the tune of a good argument.

I must say that I think the mode in which the Calvinistic system is stated in vol. iii. p. 53 of our text-book, is, for practical purposes, rather unfortunate. I demur not to the substantial doctrine, but to the manner in which it is here put forth, and which I think is calculated to lay a crushing arrest on the practical work of Christianization. In the first place, I do not see what business we ever had to enter at all on a speculation about the precise amount of saving efficacy that lay in the atonement by Christ, and whether it were commensurate to the salvation of all men, or commensurate only to the salvation of the elect. It is a most distasteful and a most unpractical question, that we had no call to try our arithmetic

* See vol. iii. p. 46.

upon. The thing wherewith we have to do is, that in virtue of Christ's mediation and sacrifice, there is salvation for all who will, and most assuredly a salvation in which not a creature who places his reliance upon it will be disappointed. This is the message wherewith we are charged, and with this we are fully warranted to go round among all the families of the earth, or to give it a more familiar and business application, a message which every parish minister might carry round among all the households, and as good Richard Baxter did in the town of Kidderminster, beseech every individual he met with to mind the things which belong to their peace. And this speculation, as put by some of the particular redemptionists, has not only an unpractical, we fear it has an antipractical effect, and more especially when coupled with the sentiment expressed in another clause of the text-book, even that it is not in the power of man to increase or diminish the number of the saved. I do apprehend that when Calvinism is put in this particular way, it may be so mistaken as to paralyze the zeal and activity of ministers for the Christianization of their parishes—of parents for the Christianization of their families—of religious philanthropists for the Christianization of their neighbourhoods, or of those who are placed within the sphere of their respective influences. I hold this way of putting things to be very unfortunate, and more especially that I think there is a method of so representing the matter as to combine the most rigid opinion on the subject of God's sovereignty and God's predestination, with the most strenuous prosecution of all those means and measures which either Scripture has prescribed or experience has confirmed as the likeliest expedients for speeding and multiplying the work of conversion in the land.

I do hope that when you meet with passages in the text-book which would go to reduce the importance and the effect of human agency in the business of Christian instruction, the illustrations which I have already brought forward will not be altogether lost upon you. I beg you will never lose sight of the distinction between the predestination that fixes a deter-

minate and isolated event, and the predestination that fixes and determines the steps of a process—a predestination that makes the consequence sure, but not more so than it makes sure the antecedent which went before it—a predestination that while it binds the whole in an adamantine necessity, makes the intermediate steps of the series as indispensable and as efficient as is the determinate necessity which it gives to the termination of it. When the subject is looked at under this aspect, then you will perceive how, while perfectly sure on the one hand that a distant consummation is all fixed and foreseen in the counsels of heaven, you, under the operation of what I have termed the contiguous antecedent, should give yourself with all zeal and energy to the matter on hand, to the near and immediate work which it is your part to accomplish upon earth. The doctrine of predestination should no more slacken the practical work of a Christian minister, than the doctrine of necessity should slacken the work of a teacher in any of the sciences. If predestination be true, which I believe it to be, then the extent to which chemistry shall be known, the precise number of chemists that shall be formed out of the general species, is all fixed and foreordained, and absolutely determined, to that very amount from which eventually there will not be a single hairbreadth of deviation. Yet who would ever think of any other way by which this particular education can be propagated, than by the active and busy and multitudinous teaching of it; and what is true of chemistry is just as true of Christianity, both as respects the knowledge of its doctrine and the number of its disciples. What preposterous folly to abandon the means by which this noble achievement might be carried into effect on a speculation about the whole and the final result having been already the subject of a rigid preordination. With this we have nothing to do. We are placed in the midst of the contiguous antecedents, and it is to these that we have to resign ourselves, and on these to act, and with all strenuousness, the part that we have in the process. It is neither with the commencement behind, nor with the termination before, that we need to hold our converse, but with the affairs of

that intermediate passage on which our lot is cast. It is thus that there is positively nothing either in the philosophical doctrine of necessity, or in the theological doctrine of predestination, which should at all affect a prudent and a painstaking and a busy application of the means within our reach for the accomplishment of the end that we are set upon in the walks of merchandise, or scholarship, or politics, or domestic economy ; and most assuredly these doctrines should as little affect the business of Christianity, where the means are a faith and an obedience, and the end is salvation and everlasting life. And then, as to its not being in the power of man to increase or diminish the number of the saved, there is a sense in which this may be understood with safety, but there is also a sense in which this very dangerous assertion may be most lamentably perverted. It is not true that under a universal apathy on the part of Christian ministers and philanthropists, there will be the same number of the saved as under the labours of zealous, enlightened, and able clergymen. This can be made quite consistent with the doctrine of a predestination which includes this zeal and activity ; but we are far better employed when, instead of theorizing on the way in which the zeal and the activity have been originated, we enter on the field of Christian labour and actually put them forth, and that too in the full confidence, a confidence warranted both by Scripture and by experience, that he who labours most assiduously in his allotted vineyard, has the best reason to expect, and will in general realize, the greatest amount of fruit from his labour.

BOOK IV.—CHAP. VIII.

OPINIONS CONCERNING THE APPLICATION OF THE REMEDY.

THE PRAYER.

WE deeply humble ourselves, O God, under a sense of our own manifold infirmities. May Thy Spirit be sent forth to help them, to strengthen all our purposes of obedience, to arm us against the assaults of every external temptation, and lead us so to live as to evince that Thy law has the supreme rule and authority over us. Rule in us by Thy Spirit—rule over us by Thy law; and may we under the vivid apprehension of our own frailty ever go forth on the work of obedience in an attitude of prayerful dependence on Him who alone can bear us off more than conquerors from every scene of duty or of danger.

The Arminians allow, then, consistently with their principle, that there is such a process as the improvement of a less measure of grace, and the bestowment of a larger measure of grace in consequence.

We could adduce a host of Scripture testimonies to the reality of a process the most important perhaps of any that is revealed to us in the New Testament, on the matters of practical Christianity. It is that in virtue of which greater advantages are given both for the understanding and the practice of religion, if we make a busy and a faithful improvement of smaller ones. At the very commencement of the process, in fact, this principle comes into play, insomuch that we are responsible for the use or the neglect even of those ordinary and natural advantages which are common to all men. The general light of conscience in man brings the people of all countries under a distinct responsibility for their use or their neglect of it; and a still higher responsibility lies on those who, in addition to this law of the heart, have lived in a Christian land, and had the external light of the gospel around their habitations. This is distinctly intimated to us in the passage of its being

more tolerable for those of Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment, than for those to whom the offers of Christianity were made, and on whom its evidence had shone. Now, we know not how early in this process the Spirit intervenes, nor how far beyond the pale of all who shall eventually be saved the Spirit carries His internal operations on the heart and the consciences of men. There is a distinction made by theologians between the ordinary and the saving influences of the Spirit of God, proceeding on a conviction which I think most fully warranted by Scripture, that these influences are vouchsafed to many who shall finally fall short of everlasting life. I will bring only one quotation in support of this doctrine, though many others equally pertinent and decisive might be adduced. There are men spoken of by the Apostle Paul who have tasted of the Holy Ghost, and yet fall irrecoverably away, so that there shall be a moral impossibility in the way of ever renewing them again to repentance. Now, connected with this there is a principle very frequently asserted in Scripture, and a process founded thereupon, which announces its own equity. It is, that to the faithful and right use of the present light or the present strength, more light and more strength will be given; and conversely, that if the intimations of our present light be disregarded, that light will be gradually, and perhaps at length irrecoverably, withdrawn from us; or, if our present strength be not put forth, that strength will waste into decline, and may at length sink into a helpless moral impotency. There is a law, in fact, of spiritual dispensation that accords with the law of habit in this respect, and it is expressed briefly but comprehensively in this single verse—"He who hath, to him shall be given; and he who hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath." There are innumerable passages in the Bible which can only be explained by this procedure of the Divine economy. My Spirit will not always strive with the children of men; He will withdraw Himself from those who resist His influences: and so also we are told, to grieve not the Spirit—to quench not the Spirit—to tempt not and provoke not the Spirit to abandon us—all implying

that He, when thwarted in the discharge of His office, as either the monitor or the strengthener of man, is discouraged and repelled by the oppositions of the human mind, and at length desists from the work of plying us any longer with His admonitions and His warnings, or of affording those supplies of help from the sanctuary by which man is upheld in the work of obedience. It is thus that there is a regress of character effected by the successive withdrawals of the Spirit of God from the soul, and, on the other hand, a progress effected by successive enlargements of this influence from on high, as intimated in the following decisive testimonies of Scripture:—"The Holy Ghost is given to those who obey Him;" "If any man keep my sayings, to him will I manifest myself;" "To him who ordereth his conversation aright, I will shew my salvation;" "The path of the just is as the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day;"—these all mark a connexion between the diligent use of our present advantages, and the further augmentation of them, and unveiling, as it were, the secret steps of that mental or moral history which, though never delineated by the finger of science, has oft been realized amid the doubts and the prayers and the growing illuminations of many an humble Christian, who, by this very process, advances from one degree of strength to another, till he appears perfect before God in Zion.

I cannot expatiate on what I hold to be a beautiful and important consequence which may be educed from this process. I think it another way by which to reach a blow to Antinomianism, and to demonstrate the thoroughly practical character of the Christian religion. They who make faith all in all, and works nothing, may perhaps be revolted by the affirmation, that not only is faith the principle of works, but that works have a reflex influence on faith, so as both to enlighten and to strengthen it. This finds its explanation in the doctrine, that the Spirit of God imparts more largely of His gifts and His influences in the proportion that we turn to account the gifts formerly received or the influences formerly shed upon us. He is the author both of our clearer discernment of the truths and our more vigorous obedience to the precepts of the gospel; and He

may reward, as it were, our faithful use of one of His gifts by bestowing upon us another—our strenuous conformity to the duties of religion by our broader view of its doctrines. It is thus that there is a connexion, both intimated in Scripture and realized in the experience, I would say, of all Christians, between obedience and spiritual discernment on the one hand, between disobedience and spiritual darkness or despondency on the other. It is on this principle I should be inclined to bestow a different treatment from what is commonly given to cases of obstinate religious despondency. These melancholy patients complain that they can catch no bright or exhilarating view of the Saviour, and the way in which they are generally proceeded with is by the bare exposition of the truth, a declaring of the faith to them in its simplicity, and a reiterating of this again and again in their hearing, and all without effect in moving them out of their leaden apathy, or rather out of their settled and to all appearance incurable despair. Now, I feel strongly inclined to treat this case of religious melancholy just as I would a case of common or constitutional melancholy, by giving something to do. It will often, it will almost always be found, that this heavy and heartless depression is connected with some habit of disobedience. I would bid the subject of my spiritual treatment take note of his practical delinquencies ; I would awaken him to duty and righteousness, in all their varieties ; I would tell him to keep closely and diligently at the work of the Christian precepts, if he wanted the light and the comfort of the Christian privileges ; I would point out a thousand passages in Scripture, whence I could gather that not only did faith animate morality, but where the moralities of the gospel brightened the manifestations of its faith—as in the noble passage of the prophet Isaiah, where the loosing the bands of wickedness, and the breaking of every yoke, and the dealing of bread to the hungry, are represented as causing the light of the soul to break forth as the morning, and its health to spring forth speedily.

But leaving this collateral subject, let us in one short paragraph state the application of our principle to the matter on

hand. We believe, then, that far beyond the pale of those who shall finally be saved, there are the dawns of religious conception and the aspirations of religious earnestness. Even at the very outskirts of the world's population, there is a natural law of morality mixed up with the impression of a God—what the Apostle denominates a law to themselves—by which all those shall be judged who are strangers to the external laws of revelation. We believe that in reference both to the dwellers out of Christendom and to those in Christendom who fall short of Christianity in the only effectual sense of the term, there may be those influences which theologians have termed the ordinary influences of the Spirit of God ; and we furthermore believe, there is no man who is rightly affected by these, and improves them to the uttermost, who will not be the subject of larger and brighter manifestations. We furthermore think, that no man who is condemned on the day of judgment will be found to have done all he might with his own actual and personal advantages, however slender they may have been, for that if he had done so more would have been given to him. The clear principle of equity on which he will be condemned, in fact, is that he has not done so, and so it will be found of every man that he is the wilful author of his own misdoing. Let us not then, in arguing against the Arminian scheme of an independent human will co-operating with the grace of God, let us not shut our eyes against the reality of that process which we have been attempting to unfold, and in virtue of which we think that man may put forth resistance to the motions of the Spirit within him, and incur on this account a most just sentence of condemnation ; that, on the other hand, he may welcome and cherish and obey those motions, in doing which it is very possible that he may be sensible of nothing more than of faithfully acting up to the lights of conscience and understanding within him, and that as the effect of his so doing, those lights are made to brighten more and more along the path of his history, so that, from day to day, he becomes a more intelligent and a more devoutly active Christian than before. The reality of such a process is not the proper or real point of dif-

ference between the Arminians and Calvinists. Both, I think, ought to acknowledge a resistance on the one hand to the grace of God, and the busy conscientious forthputting of all the strength and light we are favoured with on the other, as in stirring up the gift that is in us. The question between them is, whence are we to account for the difference between the man who resists, and the other who conforms to the intimations and actings of the Spirit of God? The Arminian would refer us to an independent self-originating power in man, the Calvinist refers even this disposition to improve grace, as well as every other good and perfect gift, to a visitation from above, so as from beginning to end to make it of grace altogether that we are what we are.

You will perceive from the close of this chapter, how nearly at times a sincere Arminian and a Calvinist may approximate. The latter cannot deny that there is a resistance of the Spirit of God; and as to the former, that is the Arminian, I could not desire a more ample concession from him than is expressed in his fourth article—that the grace of God is the beginning, the progress, and the perfection of all good. We hold him as a theorist on Christian subjects to be very defective. But let him consistently proceed on this declaration of one of his articles, and this will prove, in spite of his errors, that, to use a familiar phrase, the root of the matter is in him. There are such recognitions among the Arminians as afford the utmost scope of sentiment and feeling to the humble, and so men alike humble of each denomination may be said, while they differ speculatively, to realize the same common test of Christianity, “by their fruits ye shall know them.” Such occasional instances as this, however, do not annihilate the importance of the Church having Calvinistic rather than Arminian articles, as we believe that the consistent ministrations of the former are infinitely more effectual in speeding onward the cause of Christianity, both as to its faith and its practical righteousness.

I think the precise difference between the Arminian and the Calvinistic theories is not very clearly or appositely stated in the text-book. The author makes an Arminian affirm certain things

in respect to the application of the remedy, and after he has finished the exposition of our system on this point,* he proceeds to say that the Calvinistic system gives a very different view of the application of the remedy. I should like you to accompany me, sentence for sentence, over at least one part of this passage in the text-book, and that with the view of making you distinctly comprehend how it is that I would discriminate the two systems of doctrine from each other. "As higher degrees of grace are supposed to be given in consequence of the improvement of those which were previous, the Arminians consider the efficacy of all grace as depending upon the reception which it meets with." —P. 64. I should also say that the efficacy of all grace depends on the reception it meets with, with the single exception of that grace which goes to the account of disposing us rightly to receive it; for I differ from the Arminians, in ascribing the receptive disposition, as well as all that is received by it, to grace also. But let us not overlook the important practical affirmation, that, with this exception, all other grace is effectual only according to the way in which it is received and improved by us. "They cannot say that it is of the nature of grace to be effectual; for though, according to their system, it be given to all with such impartiality, that he who believes had not originally a larger portion of grace than he who does not believe, yet there are many in whom it does not produce faith and repentance." This sentence is quite right, I think, and I would only remark, that I hold it to be quite an assumption on the part of the Arminians, that there is an original grace given to all equally and impartially. I am by no means sure that the same force of moral suasion is brought originally to bear upon all spirits, and I feel quite sure that the same susceptibility of being operated upon by that moral suasion, has not been given to all. There is an inequality, an original inequality, in this respect, our only difficulty respecting which is the difficulty that attaches to the character and conduct of God, and a difficulty, too, that admits of being met by the very considerations which, in Butler's Analogy, are brought to bear

* Vol. iii. pp. 64-67.

on all the other inequalities of the gifts of nature and of providence. "It is purely, therefore, from the event that grace is to be distinguished as effectual or ineffectual; and the same grace being given to all, there is no other cause to which the difference in the event can be ascribed, than the difference in the characters of those by whom it is received." It is purely from the event that we come to know whether the grace is effectual or not. The assertion that the same grace is given to all is a gratuitous supposition, and yet we can agree with them in thinking that the difference in the event is to be ascribed to a difference in the character of those by whom it is received. This, however, still leaves untouched the question, Whence this original difference of character? and it is precisely on the solution of this question that I would make the difference between the Calvinists and the Arminians to turn. "As the event of the grace of God is conceived to depend upon man, it follows, according to this system, that the grace of God may be resisted, *i.e.*, the obstacles opposed by the perverseness of the human will may be such as finally to prevent the effect of this grace." The event does not depend upon any self-determining power in man, and yet it depends on man's will—that will, in fact, resisting the grace which it ought to have yielded to, and incurring a righteous condemnation in virtue of that resistance; and yet we hold this to be quite consistent with the Calvinistic system, that God distinguished those on whom the grace took effect in this way—that He not only wrought in them the grace of the gospel, but He willed and wrought in them to will the reception of it. "Accordingly, the Arminians find themselves obliged to give such an account of the nature of grace as admits of its being resistible." All that grace which is apart from the disposition to receive it is resistible. Grace, in its comprehensive meaning, as including also the disposition to receive it, is not resistible.

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By a jealousy of himself, by a vigilant guardianship of his character, by prayer and diligence, and all the instruments of moral and spiritual cultivation, by a strenuous effort that his

shall not be a counterfeit but a real Christianity ; in a word, by as practical and painstaking a life as if predestination and perseverance had no place either as doctrines in the Bible or as articles of faith in any of the creeds and confessions of Christendom, man may assure himself of his conversion being a reality.

Here, then, is another example in which Arminians and Calvinists, with all the theoretical difference which is betwixt them, do in practice agree. It is therefore the more to be regretted that for the sake of securing the practical benefit which they imagined that Calvinism destroyed, the Arminians should in their speculations on the divine economy of grace have advanced sentiments that derogated from the sovereignty of God ; and by disowning His predestination, should in fact disown His prescience. An Arminian should say to a disciple whom he imagined to be converted—this conversion of yours, though real, is not necessarily an abiding one ; that will depend on your own exertions, and you must, therefore, give all diligence to keep fast what you have gotten. Now, wherein would the address of a Calvinist differ from this ? He would not say, this conversion of yours, though real, is not necessarily abiding ; but he would set out with as good a premise to the inference that should follow,—he would say, this change that has been effected upon you, though a likely and a promising one, may not be a real conversion, and therefore you must give all diligence to make it sure ; an Arminian would say, give all diligence to make it good. We admit the doctrine of an absolute election, but the only way in which you can discover yourself either to others or to your own mind to be one of the elect, is by realizing on your own person that character of moral and spiritual excellence to which the elect are as much predestined as they are to heaven. And we admit the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints ; but the question is yet unresolved whether you are one of those saints ; and the only way in which you can ever know, or have an actual part in this great privilege, is by the sanctity and the virtues of your life. The disputants are widely at variance on subjects of specula-

tion ; but you see how each may be stimulated by his own peculiar view to a life of unremitting activity and care—the Arminian to make fast that position of the convert which he thinks he has attained ; the Calvinist to satisfy himself that it is indeed a position which he has actually gained. Both have an equal interest in the busy cultivation of all moral and spiritual excellence, for both know that without the virtues of the Christian life they will have no part in the joys of a Christian eternity. But the Calvinist has this special advantage—his profounder views of the sovereignty of God, and of the dependence of all on the will and power of the Divinity, will naturally incline him more to the expedient of prayer. The Arminian, if his heart be at all inflated by the views of his understanding, will have a self-sufficiency unfavourable to his progress in the service of that Being who resisteth the proud. The Calvinist, if his feeling be at one with his theory, will be on the best and likeliest vantage-ground for proficiency in the service of that Being who giveth grace to the humble.

And there is one most decisive advantage which a well-understood Calvinism has over all the systems which are opposed to it. It affirms that all is of grace, proceeding on the fundamental position that man is unable of himself to think a good thought, or to do a good thing. The Arminian, on the other hand, ascribes to man an ability for something ; and accordingly, what he experimentally finds man to be able for, to that he will give a character of religiousness which the other denies. Only reflect here on the difference in the standard of religious practice which this may involve. Man, in the exercise of his natural powers and natural feelings, may exhibit what have been called the natural virtues of the human constitution. Without the aid of a spiritual visitation from on high, he may be instinctively just, and benevolent, and courageous, and true, yet without any practical regard or feeling of subordination in his heart towards God. He may, even on the strength of a native resolution, which it is altogether competent for man without the aids of divine grace to conceive and to execute, be punctual in the discharge of many a religious observance,

yet be destitute all the while of that religion which is in spirit and in truth. Now the Calvinist, proceeding altogether on the idea that a right religious state is utterly beyond the original powers of man even to approximate to by ever so little, sends forth, from the very outset of his earnestness, the cries of helplessness and distress. His thinking so humbly of what he is, is connected with his thinking so highly of what he ought to be. When he says, that man cannot of himself think a good thought, or do a good thing, it is because of the exalted apprehension that he has of God's law. He may not have a lower estimate of the human powers, after all, than the Arminian; but, with a far loftier estimate of the religious standard, he affirms, that to those powers such a standard is wholly inaccessible. He perceives how complete the moral and spiritual revolution of character required is ere he can be a Christian, and so puts into busiest operation the engines of faith and prayer; and so a Christianity arises based in deepest humility, but which, watered by the dew of heaven from the earliest germination of it, rises with the impress not of an earthly but of a heavenly character upon it, and so is fit for being transplanted into the Paradise of God.

Before proceeding to our examination on the ninth chapter of the Fourth Book of Hill's Lectures, I would remark on the commencement of the paragraph in the 67th page, that I hold him unfortunate in his statement of what he calls the fundamental principle of the Calvinistic system, and at variance, in fact, with what he had formerly represented to be that principle, which I should hold, in his own language, to be the entire dependence of the creature upon the Creator, and the will of the Supreme Being being the cause of everything that now exists, or that is to exist at any future time. We regard as unfortunate the assertion that Christ did not die for all men, but for those of every nation who are in the end to be saved. We think that the only practical and important view which should be taken of the power of Christ's death is, that it is a death of efficacy to save all who shall repent and believe; and that the way to extend the benefits of this death, the way to

multiply those who shall eventually be saved by it, is to call on men everywhere to repent; and for the purpose of gaining their persuasion or belief, is to ply them everywhere with the substance of the Christian message, which substance, in fact, by the manifestation of its truth to the conscience, involves in it the main credentials of the message. I positively do not see the call or necessity we ever had to speculate on the connexion between the power of Christ's death and the actual number of the saved, treating the subject as we would a question of calculation. I would again recall to you the extracts I read upon this topic from Douglas' book on the Truths of Religion, in which he felicitously says that he regards that question not as a question of numbers, but as a question of connexion, instituting a parallelism in the matter between Adam and Christ. Whoever is connected with the first Adam by descent, has part in the guilt and also in the depravity of his progenitor; and in like manner, whoever is connected with the second Adam by faith, has part both in His meritorious righteousness and in the regenerating influences of the Spirit, which is at His giving. This view leaves untouched the questions of election and divine sovereignty to be resolved on other principles, which doctrines it has been our strenuous object to evince should have no effect in limiting the warrant wherewith the Christian minister is empowered to go forth upon the species, and to make intimation to all and sundry, that if they will but venture their reliance on the promises of the gospel, and proceed upon its calls, they shall be saved.

BOOK V.—CHAP. I.

REGENERATION—CONVERSION—FAITH.

THE PRAYER.

WE again, O God, would approach Thee with the reverence which is due to Thy name. We stand in daily, rather in perpetual need of supply out of Thy fulness; and therefore would we persevere in the habit of daily and hourly application, asking till we receive, seeking till we find, knocking till the door be opened to us. More especially do we pray for mercy to pardon, and for grace to help us in every time of need. We have nothing but our own infirmities to speak of; may the power of Christ be made to rest upon them, and we be enabled to do all things through Him strengthening us.

There is a wide difference between the scholastic and the practical, which is the scriptural treatment of the momentous doctrine of regeneration. The scholastic treatment of it has often been carried most extravagantly far, viewed as it has often been in the light of a physical rather than of a moral question. It were a great disencumbrance to theology to cast off all those excesses of speculation into which men have been carried by attending to this doctrine as they would to a process of mental physiology. On this subject we should keep by the generalities of Scripture, which, general as they be, are not vague, but distinct and decisive, and tell with the utmost precision and power on the conduct of the inquirer, giving a most specific direction to his mind, while labouring under a concern for his immortal interests, and prosecuting the question, What shall I do to be saved?

For, in the first place, what can be of greater practical interest to a human creature than, without any revelation as to the mode or the mysteries of the new birth, to be told that unless he do in fact undergo it, he shall not enter the kingdom of God? This at least carries to him the plain intimation, that the state he is in by nature is not the state it will do to die in—that without such a renewal, or such a transformation of

mind as justifies the magnitude of the term employed in Scripture to express it, even that of being born again, or born from above—that without this he is on the road to an undone eternity. Even though he know of nought more special than this, it were enough at least to awaken the strongest general alarm and earnestness. The doctrine, then, though not pushed further than to such a very general announcement as this, might be a powerful weapon in the hands of a Christian minister, whose business it is to state, and that in the most urgent and persevering way, to his hearers, that if they remain what nature made them, they will die ; and if not so made over again as to become new creatures, they will have no part nor lot in the blessed resurrection. Even with but this to announce, you might do much in awakening nature from its deep lethargy, and in breaking up the repose in which the human spirit so loves to indulge. It is like laying an axe to the root of that meagre and superficial Christianity which is the undoing of thousands and tens of thousands ; and I know not a more satisfactory characteristic of a radically sound and scriptural clergyman, than that he tells his people fearlessly and without mitigation, how, without a mighty revolution in the first and natural habitudes of the human spirit, we are the children of the world, and with the world will be destroyed.

At the same time I feel sensible, that without a more special information than this, the doctrine, when only advanced thus far, will do little more than break up the tranquillity of nature, and induce a general feeling of insecurity and disquietude. Even this is a mighty service in the work of Christianization, to lessen the dependence which man naturally has on his own powers, and the complacency he feels in the prospects of his own deceitful imagination. But a great deal more must be told ere he can be made to understand wherein it is that his precise deficiency lies, and what that is which, if made out, will repair the deficiency, and make him meet for a blessed eternity.

The Scripture affords all the particular information which is necessary. But still it reveals to us nothing respecting the *modus operandi*—nothing to satisfy the scholastic curiosity of

those who would look at regeneration as a physical process, and would fain trace the secret steps of the mysterious and invisible agency by which it is brought about. Its revelations do not refer to the *modus operandi* at all, but only to the characteristics of the *opus operatum*. It describes to us not the consecutive terms of the production, but it describes to us very particularly the qualities of the product. It no doubt gives a general intimation that the Spirit of God is the agent in the matter of regeneration, but in a manner and by a way which itself tells us is wholly untraceable, and so therefore it has put a bar on the curiosity of our restless and prying intellects in this direction. Yet, while so reserved about this, the Bible is most abundantly explicit on what to us is practically far more interesting. It reveals not the interior mechanism of the operation, but it reveals the fruits of operation, the moral virtues which result from it, and the character of him by whom it has been undergone—the love, the peace, the joy, the meekness, the temperance, the longsuffering, the goodness, and the faith, by which each may individually know whether he has been subjected to a regenerating influence, whether he is a new creature.

Now, it is thus that the minister of the gospel is so copiously furnished with the materials of an urgent appeal to all consciences. The Bible tells him what the works of the flesh, or, in other words, what the moral characteristics of nature or of the old man are; and it also tells him what the fruits of the Spirit are, what the moral characteristics of grace or of the new creature are, and he can lay the convincing evidence of his own state before each of his individual hearers. He may set him to try himself by the characteristics which he feels to be in his heart, or which stand palpably out on the deeds of his history. It is not by the felt working of the Spirit, but by the observed working of the Spirit, that we ascertain ourselves to be the children of regeneration. Scripture marks apply not to the generating process, but to the thing generated. Instead of having to find our mysterious way through the arcana of a process that is hidden and unsearchable, there are obvious and decisive tests by which a man might know himself whether he

is born of God. And we repeat, that we know of no preaching more useful than that by which a man is revealed to himself, by which he learns, from the conscious ungodliness of his own heart, that he stands on the wrong side of the line of demarcation, by which he is made to stand convicted of such deficiencies as, if not repaired, will leave his eternity unprovided for, and so lead him to cast about for a remedy, and to take no rest to his soul until he find it.

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It is often said that we know only the general fact of conversion, but we know nothing of the manner of it. We know that for the accomplishment of this effect the Spirit operates on the character of man, and transforms it to an entirely different and new character; but we know not how He operates, or by what particular and intermediate steps it is that we can connect the first listing of the Spirit, who bloweth where He listeth, with the final result of a regenerated human spirit. And certain it is, that there may be many hidden intermediate terms between the first movement of the Spirit and the last result of His operation on the heart and character of man of which we know nothing; and it is by the divings of a presumptuous theology into the unknown and unknowable arcana of the subject that so much discredit and delusion have been attached to an undoubted Scripture doctrine. Yet it is not altogether true that we know nothing of intermediate terms, of certain things between God's Spirit and man's mind, and as far as we know these do we know something even of the manner of conversion. Let the unauthorized speculations of those who would dive into what may be termed the mental physiology of the process be for ever discarded, but this does not hinder that there may be certain palpable intermedia through which the Spirit operates on the mind, and which it is of the utmost practical importance should be adverted to. If, for example, though it be not universally, yet if it be generally, through the revelation of Bible truths and the moral influence of Bible lessons, that the Spirit establishes over the understanding of man the ascendancy of new principles, and awakens the

heart of man to the sensibility and the power of new affections, this is letting us know so much not merely of the fact, but also of the manner of the Spirit's working, and it is a manner, too, which it is of prime and practical importance that we should know. It is weighty and most material information, and of the utmost moment as to the guidance of all who have been visited with religious earnestness. It is letting them know what their likeliest position is for being in the way of the influences of this heavenly visitant. It is giving them to understand, if I may so express it, the place of meeting, the place of assignation between the Spirit of God and the spirit of man, and telling the aspirant after heaven that he should give earnest heed to the words of God's testimony, till the day dawn and the day-star arise in his heart.

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The mystics of whom Dr. Hill speaks* were, many of them, as synergistical as the Pelagians. They retired from the world, they gave themselves to laborious meditation, they made painful sacrifices, they maintained a strenuous conflict with the propensities of nature, and, as far as I can perceive, might, in perfect consistency with their peculiar tenets, have regarded their consequent meetness for heaven to have been as much the joint result of man's working along with God's working as they did with whom they are contrasted in the text-book. I would not think of opposing the Pelagians and semi-Pelagians to the hermits, or the men of penance and prayer, in the Middle Ages. I would have opposed them to the Fatalists, whose notions of fatalism led them to the utter abandonment of the use of means or of all activity in the religious life, to a sort of waiting or expectant quietism in which they passively continued till visited by an influence that came, as they thought, irresistibly upon them, and without any working beforehand or co-operation on their part. Such men, whether they distinctly appeared in ancient times as a sect or not, are the proper counterpart to the Pelagians; and certain it is that the error is not confined to any one denomination, but leavens with Antinomianism the

* Vol. iii. p. 194.

men of various parties in the present day, and has established a kind of spurious predestination in the bosom of Christendom.

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I think there is a light within the reach of each man which, had he improved it as he ought, would have conducted him to larger manifestations, and issued in his salvation. It is his resistance to this light which forms the principle of his condemnation in the day of reckoning. It will be found on the examinations of that day that men did not avail themselves as they ought of the knowledge they actually had, of the strength they actually had. It is this which puts a minister on high vantage-ground in reference to all the hearers of his congregation. He has a something wherewith he can ply every man's conscience there, and by which he can enlist every man's conscience on the side of religion. But the conscience often gives its testimony on the side of the minister without obtaining a practical ascendancy over the hearer. It has lifted a remonstrating but not an effectual voice ; and this it is which forms the material of the man's condemnation. He was made to know and, in a certain degree, to feel what was right, and he might have followed up what he felt if he would. But he would not ; and because of the moral perversity of his will he becomes a proper subject of the condemnatory sentence in the last day of account. I hold it of mighty importance to concede this to the universal redemptionists, however much it may carry the semblance of a participation in their error. But it is only a semblance, for this much can be conceded without trenching on any peculiarity of the most rigorous Calvinism. While we admit there is a light of conscience among them all enough to condemn if they will not follow its dictates, there is still room for the question, Why is it, then, one man wills, and another wills not ? On the principles of Christian necessity, or, what is better and more authoritative far, on the principles of the Bible, we can give no other answer than that it is God which makes one man to differ from another, and that it may be predicated of all men, that they have nothing which they did not receive.

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Let me here remark that there is very great danger in misconceiving the sentiments of others, more especially when grouped into a class or theological party. I think the Church has suffered a great deal less from the presence of men who have alleged a pretension to inward light, apart from Scripture, than from the presence of men who, confiding in the power of the natural faculty as all-sufficient for the right discernment of Scripture, have decried and derided every pretension to inward light whatever. There are some expressions in the text-book which I should like to have been guarded and modified, ere they had found admittance there. The impression given by it is, that a spiritual communion, and the approach of the soul to God, is a species of perfection merely ideal. There is an approach of the soul to God, there is a spiritual communion, there is an intimate revelation of the things of faith to the soul, which we restrict no doubt to the things of Scripture, but which still is realized by the children of light, and in comparison with which the calm and uniform performance of the things that are good and profitable to men, may be nothing more than the cold, correct, natural morality of earth, as compared with the morality of heaven—the actions of the hand, as compared with the affections of the regenerated heart.

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It is not for the mere sake of properly adjusting the theory of religion, there is a most momentous practical effect involved in our separating the constituents of faith from the consequences of faith. The gratitude, the love, the disposition towards new obedience—these are not, as represented in the text-book, the ingredients of faith, they are but the effects of it. Observe what follows by making them the ingredients. By faith we are said to be justified; but if our piety towards God, or our desire to conform to His law, or any moral characteristics whatever, shall be regarded as parts and constituents of this said faith, then, under the consciousness of our sad deficiency, we shall never attain to the solid peace of one who rejoices in a firm sense of his acceptance with God. But reduce faith to its simplicity, take it in the obvious and uncompounded sense which you attach

to the mere act of believing, regard it as purely a giving credit to God's testimony when He sets forth Christ as a propitiation for the sins of the world, and invites one and all in the world to cast upon Him the burden of their reliance, and then see how, by immediate transition, one might enter into peace and become a confiding, tranquillized, and happy creature, simply because convinced that the most powerful of Beings, whom he aforesaid regarded as an enemy and an avenger, is pacified towards him, and now makes him a free proffer of fellowship and forgiveness. It is of the utmost importance, we say, to the secure and perfect establishment of the inquirer's peace that this should be made a matter of believing, and believing only, or in other words, or to express it in the article of orthodox Churches, that the sinner is justified by faith alone—by faith we mean in the proper, and simple, and obvious sense of the term, not as made up of love, or loyalty, or any moral qualities whatever which do not enter into the constitution of faith, however surely and necessarily they proceed as fruits and consequents therefrom. It is of the utmost importance that the confidence and comfort should spring directly from the proper object of belief, which is the sureness of God's own testimony, and not from the consciousness of love, or gratitude, or any moral quality in ourselves. We must not wait till these have somehow or other arisen within us, ere we enter into confidence with God. At this rate, we shall wait for ever. The sense of our imperfections will be a constant and most oppressive discouragement in our way. It is not by looking inwardly at the disposition of our own mind towards God, but by looking outwardly at the declarations of God's mind towards us—by looking at His reconciled countenance and hearkening to His beseeching voice that our light springeth out of darkness, and we make instant transition to peace with God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Let us not suppose that by excluding moral affections, moral principles, or moral characteristics, from having any part in the essence of faith, we therefore exclude them from having any part in Christianity. They are, as I said before, the conse-

quences, though not the constituents of faith, and the exercise of faith in its direct and unencumbered simplicity, is the way to bring them on. It is not by attaching love, which is an affection of the heart, to belief, which is an act of the understanding, it is not by compounding these two together that you make out the saving faith of the gospel. This faith, in its proper elementary character, is belief and nothing else, and the exercise of faith is just a believing exercise. It is just a holding of the things said in the gospel to be true, and when pressing on your own mind the consideration how true they are, you are just acting and exercising faith in them. You do not make out a faith by tacking the love or obedience of the gospel to a belief in the gospel. This faith is but belief, and belief only, and if it be actual belief it will bring the love and the obedience in its train. I by no means, you will observe, though I exclude the moral characteristics from having anything to do in the composition of faith—I by no means, on that account, exclude them from having aught to do in the matter at all. It is true, I do not bid you fetch up a consciousness of your own moral worth, and join that with a believing regard towards God's overtures of reconciliation in the gospel, and on the strength of these two things, say that you have a warrant to rejoice in your felt agreement with the Lawgiver whom you had offended. The truth is, that in this way of it you never will reach to solid confidence or comfort, and that because one of the two elements, the moral, is of such a shadowy uncertain ambiguous character. I would therefore detach that element from what I call the great initial step in Christianity altogether, and present for your exclusive attention at the time the love which prompted God to send His Son into the world. I would bid you regard that as the single object of your believing contemplation, satisfied that though you could not emerge into confidence and peace so long as this object was hidden, or at least bedimmed by the doubtful pretensions of your own moral excellence and worth, yet when these were cleared away from the field of contemplation, and you were led to behold in separate and untarnished lustre the effulgence of heaven's good-

will to a guilty world, and to yourself among the guiltiest of all, then it is that I lay before you a clear unobstructed pathway to peace and joy in believing. And love will follow in the train. We know and believe the love that God hath to us, says the Apostle, and we love the God who first loved us. And obedience also will follow. This is the love of God, that ye keep His commandments. To make these enter among the preliminaries of a man's Christianity, is to prescribe for him an outset that is quite impracticable. To bid him simply believe at the first, and resign himself to the influence of the things believed on his heart and conduct afterwards, is the only hopeful commencement, because in the order of Scripture and the order of the human faculties.

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BOOK V.—CHAP. II.

JUSTIFICATION.

THE PRAYER.

THOU art, O God, a God of forgiveness. Thou puttest forth not of Thine anger only, but Thou puttest forth even of Thy remembrance the iniquities of Thy repentant children. We desire to rejoice in the free and gracious style of that reconciliation into which Thou enterest with those who have offended Thee—casting their transgressions behind Thee—removing them to as great a distance as the east is from the west—casting them into the bottom of the sea, or rolling them away into the land of forgetfulness, where no more mention is made of them. But though Thou art thus a God of forgiveness, let us know it is a forgiveness that Thou mayest be feared; and may we combine with the security of the Christian faith, the diligence of the Christian practice. Be with us now and ever.—Amen.

There is nothing which has served more to obliterate the peculiarities of the gospel, and to introduce an indistinct, and wayward, and meagre, and superficial theology in its place, than the confounding the respective parts and functions which jus-

tification and sanctification have in the system of Christianity. It is evident that if you introduce human obedience, even the obedience of the most perfect man upon earth, into that judicial righteousness on which God admits him into heaven, and that because of his legal claim to its inheritance, you invest him with that claim because of a righteousness which is imperfect. You make a compromise between the dignity and authority of God's law on the one hand, and man's disobedience, because man's frail and defective obedience, on the other. You bring down in that way the honours of the Divine government; whereas one great purpose of the mediation by Christ is to provide for the acceptance of the sinner, but in such a way as shall magnify that law which the sinner has violated, and make it honourable.

You know how for this purpose He took upon Himself the penalty that we should have borne, and fulfilled the obedience that we should have rendered. Our legal claim to heaven consists not in the merit of our own obedience, but in the merit of the obedience of Christ—a merit commensurate to the utmost demands of the law, and by sustaining which there is no infraction whatever on the law's prerogatives. This is what I might well term a contrivance of exquisite skilfulness, by which God, in consistency with His unchangeable attributes, and the high sovereign state which belongs to Him as the Lord and the Legislator of heaven and earth, can, not for our own righteousness' sake, but for the sake of the righteousness of another, give to frail and polluted creatures such as we a rightful investiture with the honours and the rewards of eternity.

The grand peculiarity of the gospel lies in this, that sinners are not absolved from punishment by an act of simple forgiveness, but by a forgiveness obtained for us as the reward of another's sufferings; neither are they admitted to everlasting reward by an act of simple bestowment, but a bestowment which comes to them as the reward of another's obedience. Our sins are laid to the Saviour's account, and He bears the whole burden of them. His righteousness is laid to our account, and we are invited to the full reward of it. This doctrine of the exchange

between the sinner and the Saviour, of the substitution of the one in place of the other, pervades the whole New Testament ; and it is nowhere more distinctly expressed than in the following sentence : “ He became sin, or a sin-offering, for us, though He knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.”

Now it would nullify this part of the evangelical dispensation altogether, if anything else were admitted into the plea of right between God and man than that one thing which God hath expressly provided for the purpose of making out such a right. To mix up the obedience of the sinner with that of the Saviour, as entering at all into the judicial consideration on which heaven is ascribed to us, would be an utter subversion of that which essentially and characteristically constitutes the gospel of Jesus Christ. It would not only be in express opposition to the statements, but it would utterly traverse what may be called the great moral of the gospel. The reconciliation of the law's dignity with the bestowment of its rewards on the sinners who had defied its authority, would henceforth be reduced to nothing, and the readmission of the sinner into God's spiritual and unfallen family on the ground of a virtue that was imperfect, would land us inevitably and helplessly in the conclusion of heaven's degraded throne and dishonoured Lawgiver.

It is a subject of all others the richest I do think in sentiment and principle, and also in practical application—affecting not merely the character of God's administration, but the great interests both of the sinner's peace and of his progressive holiness. On this subject I have already expatiated at great length, and will say no more at present than state my deep and growing conviction of the vast importance of the article in question to the wellbeing of the Christian Church. The Reformers, in making their uncompromising and unflinching stand for the doctrine of justification by faith alone, made a stand for what, in my estimation, forms the very essence of the Christian revelation ; and I do most cordially acquiesce in the sentiment of Luther, when he affirms of this great doctrine, that by its admis-

sion or its rejection, it forms the *articulum ecclesiæ stantis aut cadentis*.

And let us not imagine, we repeat, that by rejecting human virtue from any place in our title-deed to heaven, we therefore reject it from an indispensable place in the personal character of all who are admitted there. To secure the interests of virtue, it is not necessary to confound things which are in themselves distinct, or give to one the place which properly and exclusively belongs to another. Though virtue enter not as a constituent, its existence is no less secured, if it be a sure and unfailing consequence from the faith of the gospel. The distinction, be assured, is not of a merely scholastic or speculative nature, but is of the utmost vital and practical importance in a man's Christianity. How the doctrine we now advocate of justification by faith alone not only brings surely after it the sanctification of all who believe, and not only insures the being, but immeasurably refines and exalts the personal character of our righteousness, will fall more properly to be discussed in the next chapter of our text-book, which treats of the connexion between justification and sanctification. Meanwhile, we make confident assertion of the two propositions which we now utter in your hearing—that a man is justified by faith without the works of the law, and that without holiness no man shall see God.

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When an Arminian enters upon his course for heaven, his point of departure is from what he calls his first justification, a privilege common to him along with all men. The landing-place or termination or further extremity of that course is his second justification, which all along the course it is his incessant labour to make out by a patient continuance in well-doing. If he succeed he will be appointed in the last day to a place in the inheritance of the blessed, and the sentence of that day is but an open declaration of that justification which he incessantly wrought for through life, and which, by dint of a virtuous and resolute perseverance, he has carried.

There is much, we allow, in all this, assimilated to the progress of the disciple as laid before us in the New Testament.

There is a commencement which one and all are invited to make ; there is a progress in moral and spiritual excellence—a habit and a constant increase of well-doing, in which all who enter on a profession of Christianity are urged to persevere ; there is, lastly, a day of judgment, in which all shall be examined as to the history of their lives or deeds done in the body, and when, as the result of that examination, they who have done evil shall be doomed to eternal punishment, they who have done well shall be admitted to life everlasting.

There is, therefore, we repeat, a general resemblance between the Arminian representation of this matter and the representation of Scripture ; and we must look more closely and narrowly to the points of distinction between the Arminian and Calvinistic schemes, ere we can properly institute a comparison, or pronounce a judgment between them.

In the first place, then, we have to remark, that this representation of the Arminians proceeds on the competency of man, by his own performances and powers, to make out his full and final justification. I can discern no homage in it to the proclaimed and peremptory declaration of the Apostle, that by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified. These works are confessedly imperfect. In motive, in principle, and even in material execution, they are short of God's lofty and spiritual commandment ; and how a justification can be made out in these circumstances we are unable to comprehend, save by a sort of half-way meeting between the law of God on the one hand, and the obedience of man on the other—by the one letting itself down to the standard of man's convenience or his wishes, and by the other lifting itself up as far as the powers or possibilities of human nature can carry it. At this rate we cannot escape from the conclusion, that the awards of the judgment-seat, if made on the principle and ground of merit, must exhibit, in the view of all the heavenly witnesses and assessors there, a degraded law and dishonoured Lawgiver—heaven's Ruler, on the one hand, receding from His own exactions and His own authority, and heaven's subjects, on the other, preferring a claim to the rewards of eternity, and that

because of their own lame and imperfect performances, which, lame and imperfect as they be, are yet offered in the presumptuous confidence that they are good enough for God.

Now, it is to do away the infliction of such a stigma on the consistency and honour of the divine administration—it is to reconcile the prerogatives of the law with the acceptance of those who have broken it—it is that God may be just, yet the justifier of the ungodly—it is to save the offence and the violence which would otherwise be done to the jurisprudence of the divine government, that, if I may so express myself, the apparatus of our redemption has been raised; and we repeat, that it would nullify the whole principle of this peculiar economy, if the plea of merit is to be introduced into the transactions between God and man, and that plea shall not fully meet all the demands of the law, and fully satisfy them. It was for the very purpose of magnifying the law, and making it honourable, that Christ for us sustained its penalties, and for us rendered faultless and unfailing obedience to all its precepts; and we actually neutralize, or rather traverse the whole purpose and design of this dispensation, if we, in the statement of our plea, thrust forward our obedience between the pure and penetrating inquisition of the Divine Lawgiver and the obedience of Christ. Instead of our righteousness standing between God and the righteousness of Christ, it is His righteousness that stands between God and any righteousness of ours. Christ's homage to the law was taking upon Himself the burden both of its penalties and its duties; and our homage to the law is our yielding ourselves to Him who bowed down His head to the sacrifice; and so we, in the act of presenting our claim to heaven before the notice of heaven's Sovereign, pray, that He would look upon us not as we are in ourselves, but that He would look upon us in the face of His anointed.

And therefore it is, that our orthodox reformers have stood forth so sturdily and so inflexibly for the doctrine of justification by faith alone. Besides its accordance with the express statements of Scripture, they have felt that the honour of the divine government, that the great legal principle which went

to characterize the whole of heaven's jurisprudence, was involved in their resolute assertion of this article. And therefore it is, that they call on their disciples, at the very outset of their Christianity, to renounce all dependence on their own present righteousness, and all hope of ever obtaining, by any future righteousness of theirs, a right, a forensic and unchallengeable right to the kingdom of heaven. Their uniform and strenuous deliverance on this subject is, that a right hath been achieved for them in another way, even by the righteousness of Christ, who, by suffering for us, hath obtained our discharge from the penalties of the law which we have broken, and by His obedience for us hath obtained that legal right to the rewards of eternity which is made over to us as a gift and a free dispensation, but which we never could have acquired or established by any obedience of our own.

Now, it is the affirmation of all Scripture, that this right, this justification, turns upon our faith. It becomes ours upon our believing. We may be deceived, we may think we believe when we do not; and so we may think we are forgiven when we are not. But this does not hinder that there is often a genuine faith, though there be also often a counterfeit resemblance of it. And if this faith may be conveyed long before death, if it may have entered the mind of one who shall have lived many years after it in the world, then, if we will make a question about the time when this man's forgiveness of all trespasses has taken effect, if this be a subject which our speculatists and our controversialists in theology will be meddling with, I see not how to escape from the conclusion, that man is often a pardoned, a fully and absolutely pardoned and accepted creature, long before his departure from the present scene of existence; or, in other words, that in this life he undergoes not the first but the final justification, and that the legal investiture is upon him of a right to deliverance from all the penalties of sin, of a right to all the rewards of obedience.

But you will observe all the while, that notwithstanding the absolute sureness of this justification in itself, the man is just in circumstances of as great urgency for leading a virtuous and

obedient life as if by its means he still had to justify his work, for a thing may be sure in itself, yet not be at all sure to him ; and the one way in which he can make himself sure of it is just by fixing and realizing in his own character the bidden piety, the bidden purity, the bidden humanity, the bidden uprightness of the gospel. He looks, and looks exclusively, at the righteousness of Christ as his alone plea, but he knows that his own personal righteousness is the required and the indispensable preparation. At all events, and whatever capacity or whatever place and function his own personal obedience has in the matter, he knows, on the express informations of the Bible, that without it he will not reach a state of eternal blessedness. To strive at such an obedience with the view of substantiating a legal right, is indeed a very different thing from striving at it in a spirit of grateful conformity to the will of Him to whom alone He looks for the establishment of that right. In the one way he must either bring down the law, or waste himself on the heartless because the impracticable task of equalizing his performances to the full and absolute perfection of its righteous demands on him. In the other way he goes forth spontaneously, on an impulse of love to the Saviour, and of respect both for the authority of all His precepts and for the truth of all His intimations, making indefinite approximations towards a perfection which, on this side of death, he will never reach, but in this way gradually assimilating himself to the character of that heaven where he will serve his Redeemer without frailty and without a flaw.

Those of you who remember my lectures on the subject of Predestination, will perceive an analogy between the practical application of that doctrine and of the one which is now engaging us. We have contended for the truth of the doctrine, but contended at the same time that it left all the inducements to an active, painstaking, busy life of Christian obedience precisely on the same footing on which it found them. Our election may be sure in itself ; but this hinders not the Scripture admonition to make our calling and election sure ; or, in other words, to make ourselves sure of our election. And the only way in which we

can obtain this assurance, is through the medium of our own personal conformity to the example and will of our Saviour ; and it is the very same in the case before us, though justification may be, for aught we know, absolutely fixed and certain already. It may have the historical and irreversible certainty of a thing already past, just as the decree of election has ; but it cannot be made certain to us save through the medium of our own personal virtues. Our own righteousness forms the alone proof to us of our having a personal interest in the righteousness of Christ ; and our want of such righteousness will be in itself an infallible proof that we really have no part nor lot in the matter.

You will here also remember what I said in regard to faith, that if genuine and real in reference to one part of the testimony, it will have respect to all the other parts of the testimony, and proceed upon the truth of them. *Pari passu* with its faith in Christ as a propitiation, it will have its regard to Him as an example, seeing that the voice which speaketh from heaven sets him forth in both these capacities. *Pari passu* with its comfort in the saying, That the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin, it will have its confidence in the authority of the saying, That without holiness no man can see God. He will embrace all the truths of Scripture—he will proceed on all. Looking at one part of the testimony, he will rejoice in that he is released from the law as a covenant ; looking at another, he will bear constant respect to the same law as the rule of life. There will be room in his mind for as much as the Bible finds room for within its pages. He will not refuse the testimony, that by faith he is saved ; but as little will he refuse the testimony, that without repentance he will perish. It, in fact, is a faith as broad and as long as the record of God's inspiration, and one which will have substantiated into harmony the two sayings—justified by faith, judged by works.

BOOK V.—CHAP. III.

CONNEXION BETWEEN JUSTIFICATION AND SANCTIFICATION.

THE PRAYER.

WE desire, O God, to address ourselves to the examination of Thy word with that humility which becomes us. Give us to feel that our right and incumbent attitude is that of little children who have all to learn. It is not for the creatures of a shortlived day to scan by their own wisdom the counsels of Him who is from everlasting to everlasting. It is not for the occupants of one small and solitary world to sit in judgment over that high administration which embraces all the worlds of the immensity that teems with them. We therefore would learn of Thee from Thine own word, and casting down all lofty imaginations, would bring every thought of our hearts into captivity to the obedience of Thine authorized messengers.

I truly know of no question that is more important than that regarding the connexion between justification and sanctification, and of none the right explanation of which would go farther to do away many difficulties, and, I may add, many prejudices and antipathies associated with our faith, or that would pour a more satisfactory light on the right character and design of Christianity. I felt it myself as the greatest enlightenment and enlargement I ever had experienced, when made to understand both the indispensable need of morality and the securities that we had for its being realized on the character of Christians, notwithstanding the doctrine that by faith, and by faith alone, we were justified—a doctrine which I at one time regarded as Antinomian in its tendencies, and as adverse to the interests of virtue or practical righteousness in the world. I know not a more essential accomplishment either for a sound doctrinal theologian or for a practical expounder of the lessons of Christianity from the pulpit, than that he should rightly discern the place which morality has in the evangelical system, on which he will not fail to perceive that a doctrine on which many of the merely sentimental lovers of morality look hardly

and suspiciously—as if it were inimical to good works, not only secures the being of morality, but inconceivably refines and purifies and exalts its character.

On the broadest view of Scripture that can be taken, you must be sensible of the very different representations it gives in different places of the importance of good works—a difference that almost impresses the idea of an opposition between one place and another, when sometimes they are vilified as of no account or estimation in the eye of God, and at another are demanded as indispensable to our entrance on a blissful eternity. I need not bring the counterpart passages into juxtaposition with each other. The bare statement I now make will recall them to your mind. They may be brought very copiously and abundantly forward, and they will at least suggest the conviction that on this matter there is much to discriminate and much to observe upon ere we shall attain a complete and harmonious view of divine truth.

* * * * *

I happen to differ wholly from our author in the historical view which he has given* of the style and spirit of pulpit ministrations both in England and this country. The period which he rejoices in as one of improvement I look back to as a Middle Age of deadness and degeneracy in the Church of Scotland; and the anterior period both here and in our sister country which he regards as an age of Antinomianism, I happen to regard as an age of far more powerful and effective preachers than those who succeeded them, by whom a greatly more extensive work of Christianization was performed, and many more thousands were not only made intelligent in the doctrine, but were personally and practically imbued with the graces and virtues of the gospel.

It may be thought surprising that two individuals who are at one on all the main points of doctrinal Christianity, who are alike Calvinistic in their views, who agree upon the whole in their notions respecting the theory of religion, should vary in their estimates as to what is and what is not the full and faithful preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ. However difficult the

* See vol. iii. pp. 232, 233.

analysis may be which would serve to explain how it is, nothing can be more certain than that so it is ; and yet it may perhaps help the explanation if we can quote a few instances where the letter of orthodoxy has been most rigorously adhered to and most powerfully advocated, and yet the spirit of it is not characterized throughout with the real fervour and unction of apostolic preaching. On the one hand, then, I think it possible to be as able a defender of the literal articles of the Calvinistic creed as even Horsley was, and yet to nauseate the personal and living application of those very truths when urged from the pulpit with all the earnestness of a mind that was thoroughly and devotedly in earnest. On the other hand, it is equally possible that ministers could be found of far laxer orthodoxy than either Horsley or Hill, who yet would pass as mystics, or even Antinomians, with men who lay claim to that very rationality which is spoken of in the text-book. I could instance the Wesleyan Methodists, who, protesting as they do against our predestination, and in some instances, I believe, against our doctrine of imputed righteousness, nevertheless deliver themselves in those very terms which suggest the idea to many, of their being after all among that class of divines who, with a liberal use of the ordinary evangelical nomenclature made up of such words as grace and faith and salvation, and the other generalities of a certain professional slang, do, in fact, lose sight of the plain and everyday duties of ordinary life, and to whom, therefore, we in vain look for those expositions of morals and manners which we find in the pages of Barrow and Tillotson, and which are marked by a shrewd discernment of character and by a wise observation of human nature. Such phenomena as these indicate the necessity of entering somewhat more deeply and fully into the subject than we otherwise should have done.

In the first place, then, I would remark that very often, I would almost say very generally, when the charge of fanaticism, or mysticism, or irrational extravagance in religion, is incurred by a man, it is not because of any doctrinal variation between him and his accuser, but it is because of a variation that may more properly be termed personal or practical. Doctrinally

the two may agree in this position, that grace from on high is requisite to their performance aright of any Christian duty. The practical inference from this is, that man, distrustful of himself, should live much in prayer, and mix the humblest supplications to God with the holiest endeavours to love and serve Him. There is no divergence between them as to the doctrine ; it is on the moment of its practical application, however consistently and however legitimately it follows from the doctrinal truth, it is then, I say, that the divergence begins, and that the cold and merely intellectual Calvinist revolts from the habit of a practical or experimental Calvinism. It is altogether worthy of remark, that it is not mere doctrine which brings down the charge of fanaticism—that this is an imputation far oftener preferred against a certain state of heart or of personal habit in reference to Christianity, than it is against a certain state of understanding or belief in reference to Christianity—that it is a contemptuous denunciation which far oftener lights on the desires and the doings that emanate from man's practical nature, than on the dogmata that come forth of his intellectual nature—that, in a word, the excessive strictness of the conduct has far more frequently to meet with this charge, than the excessive strictness of the creed. For example, it is not because one of the articles of his faith is, that man's chief end is to glorify God, that a man is branded as a fanatic ; but because he honestly labours to live in conformity to this article, and because zeal for that glory is throughout the animating principle of his conversation in the world. The despite, and ridicule, and opposition which attach to those very peculiar people called Christians, attach to them not because of the peculiarity which marks their believing, but because of the peculiarity which marks their living. They may not believe differently from the men who deride them, but they proceed on the reality of what they believe. In short, theirs instead of being Christianity in doctrine or intellect alone, is Christianity in real and practical earnest, and this whether you have heretofore adverted to it or not, will be found, on the analysis of every future observation you make, to constitute that pecu-

liarity on which the charges of fanaticism, and enthusiasm, and methodistical extravagance, are made by men of an irreligious spirit so abundantly to rest.

But how comes it, it will be asked, how comes it that Antinomianism, in reference to those people, should find a place in the list of those hostile and contemptuous charges which are preferred against them? If theirs indeed be Christianity in earnest, if the distinction between them and their despisers is, that whereas the religion of the latter has its place in the reason or understanding alone, their religion has its *locum standi* in the practical department of their nature, their Christianity must stand at the widest possible distance from Antinomianism, which supersedes practice by faith, and would make the dogmata of religion so paramount and in fact all-sufficient, as to exclude the doings of religion from any share in the right state of a man's Christianity here, or in his salvation hereafter. Our answer to this forms another call on your attentive consideration; and if I can succeed in making this matter intelligible, I trust you will perceive the reason why my estimate of pulpit ministrations at different periods in the history both of the English and Scotch Church, is altogether the reverse of that which is here presented by our author in the text-book.

The expounder of terrestrial morals necessarily makes use of those terms which are recognised, and which indeed are daily and familiarly employed in general society, as expressive whether of the ordinary duties of life, or of the merits and demerits of human conduct. In the details upon which he enters he must particularize many of the virtues and vices which are in constant exemplification before our eyes, the names by which the various graces and accomplishments of character, on the one hand, and by which the various deformities and faults and deficiencies of character, on the other, are commonly designed, must be of perpetual recurrence in his sermons; and so we shall hear from the pulpit much of statement and of urgent exhortation on the cultivation of truth, and integrity, and courteousness, and benevolence, and these perhaps minutely diversified into their modifications of plain dealing and punctuality in business,

and civility of manners, and high-minded honour, and all the other virtues which shed a grace and an exaltation on the character of man ; and we also, from the same pulpit, will hear indignant denunciations against the opposite characteristics—as, for example, against all the varieties of fraud, the duplicity, the cunning, the disguised falsehood, the convenient plausibilities which are so frequently practised in the walks of merchandise, the embezzlements of agency, the purloinings of household service, the idleness and deficiencies of workmen, the violence of successful oppression, the evil speakings, the malignant and low-minded gossipings of many a festive and social party, the unfaithful service, whether of artizans in the workshop, or of labourers in the field, or of domestics in the household establishment—why, the minister who takes cognizance in his sermons of all these minute and manifold virtues, who pictures human life in his pulpit sketches, and makes pertinent or striking applications of all that is general in ethic principle to the actual mind and manners of society, —such a man will earn the character of being a preacher strikingly and eminently practical ; and yet I call upon you well to remark, that after all it may be but the morals only of a terrestrial standard which he deals in, and these enforced only by terrestrial sanctions. Why, it is possible at this rate to be an eminently practical preacher even under an economy of atheism. The reciprocations of morality between man and man might be powerfully urged and powerfully delineated—a moral approbation might be pronounced, and that most impressively and eloquently, on that which is right—a moral indignation denounced with equal energy and effect on that which is wrong, and yet, just as an eloquent expounder of the principles of taste, both in its theory and practice, may deliver in masterly style all the lessons of the subject, without assuredly one reference to God, or the seasoning of so much as one religious principle—why may not an eloquent expounder of virtue, both in its principles and its practical applications, acquit himself in very masterly style of his business as a practical preacher, and with just so little of reference to God or to any religious sanctions

whatever, as that, mainly and effectively, his lessons are but those of an earthly morality urged home by earthly enforcements? In other words, God may in effect, though occasionally referred to, be as good as banished from a ministration of this sort altogether, or, at all events, the God of a sentimental or academic theism, and not the God of Christianity, from whose mouth have emanated the peculiar doctrines of the atonement and sanctification, may be the alone inspiring divinity of all his compositions. From this rapid and imperfect outline which I now give, I trust you perceive how a preacher may, in one sense of the word, be practical without at all being pious. The morality in whose lessons he deals may be a pure and elevated and humane and upright morality, and yet stand in his demonstrations altogether disjoined from godliness. It may be the morality of a mere citizen of earth, and not have one iota belonging to it of the morality of a citizen of heaven. It may be a most correct and classical morality as far as it goes, without, however, the very least of what may be called the flavour of the sanctuary—impregnated throughout with a classical or a philosophical or a literary spirit, but not at all with an apostolical spirit. I should like to characterize by some appropriate epithet this species of morality, for I confess I like not the distinction that is commonly made between an evangelical and a moral preacher, holding, as I do, that the evangelical preacher can only vindicate his claim to that title by being constantly and eminently a moral preacher. I want to familiarize you to another sort of distinction—to abolish, in fact, the contrast between the evangelical and the moral altogether, and to set another contrast in its place—a contrast not between the moral and evangelical preacher, but a contrast between the preacher of sacred and the preacher of secular morality, understanding by these terms, that whenever morality is enforced from the pulpit on motives altogether apart from the will and honour of God, or from its bearing on the prospects and preparations of eternity, it may, in the letter of it, be correct morality, and yet a morality which, in point of spirit, and sentiment, and motive, may be wholly secularized.

With the aid of this distinction we perhaps might enable you more justly to appreciate the character of different ages in regard to the style and quality of their pulpit ministrations. There may have been the change referred to in our text-book in that morality formed more the subject-matter of sermons with Barrow and Tillotson and Atterbury and Sherlock in England, with Blair and Charters and Logan in Scotland, than with the preachers of the generation that had gone before them. But ere you can determine whether this change be indeed an improvement, you must examine whether to the morality thus introduced there belonged the characteristics of the secular or the sacred. There might, in fact, be a great deterioration in the lessons of the pulpit even with the infusion of a greater amount of morality, and that in two ways. First, the impression given by the sermon may be that the morality thus recommended, if only followed and carried into practical fulfilment, has the reward of merit in the happiness of eternity—an impression which many a moral sermon gives even without a formal or explicit statement of the error, but by its mere reticence on the all-important doctrine of justification by faith; and, secondly, the introduction of moral preaching into the pulpit may be a degeneracy instead of an improvement if it be a morality enforced by worldly sanctions—a morality which recognises not the will of God as the supreme rule, the glory of God as the supreme object of whatever things we do in the land of our pilgrimage—a morality which stands disjoined from the prospects of the immortal state, or which, even with all its express references both to God and to eternity, recognises not that Jesus Christ is the Author of salvation—that by His sacrifice, and by it alone, we are delivered from the guilt of sin—that by His obedience, and by it alone, we are translated into the rewards of righteousness—that by His Spirit, or the Spirit which He gives in answer to the prayers of His followers, and by it alone, we are qualified for taking part in the choirs and companies of the celestial. Wanting these there may be eloquent descriptions of virtue, there may both be subtle and sound discrimination of character, there may be a searching

and anatomical inspection into the arcana of the human heart, there may be a moral glow and moral colouring throughout the whole of the pulpit composition, and yet if you distinguish the whole of morality into the secular and the sacred, and if that which wants the sacred be altogether secular, a preacher with all his talent and power and natural virtuousness, may still be a secular, an earthly moralist notwithstanding. The very duties on which he preaches may, in themselves, and apart from the motives, be after all the duties which might reciprocate between man and man under an economy of atheism. Such are the integrities, and the humanities, and even the activities of life, all enjoined most certainly by God in heaven, but which, apart from the thought of God or any sense of His authority at all, might still be urged by man upon his fellows whether in the pulpit or out of it, as the incumbent moralities of the world in which we live. And we again repeat that there may be a far more plentiful importation of such topics into the ministry of the gospel at one age than at another, and still, instead of an age of improvement, as represented in the text-book, it may have been an age of most woful and withering deterioration.

It is on these principles that we would not only modify, but utterly reverse the estimate given by our author in the text-book as to the ebbs or the alternations which may have taken place from one generation to another in the character and style of pulpit ministrations both in this country and in England. We look on the transitions which took place in the days of Stillingfleet and Barrow not as transitions from a worse to a better, but as transitions from a better to a worse; not as transitions from an Antinomian to a moral, but as transitions from a sacred to a secular; and as we proceed downwards to Clarke and Atterbury and Tillotson, we can trace, we imagine, the gradual disappearance of the *sal evangelicum*, till at length the meagre Arminianism of almost all the English pulpits, shrivelled and bereft of all that is peculiar whether in the spirit or sanctions of the gospel, gave forth, in sermons which have been compared to a fine winter day, in that they were short,

and clear, and cold, gave forth a very distinct system of practical ethics, we allow, but a system from which the whole vitality of religion had fled, and without one principle fetched down from the upper sanctuary by which to animate and to sustain it.

And I would say the very same of our own country—that its pulpits became secular and inefficient at the very time which our author has fixed upon as the period of our having become rational. It was the preaching from the days of John Knox down to nearly the middle of the last century, which first ripened and afterwards sustained the moral and religious character of the Scottish nation. The degeneracy began with the first introduction of England's elegant literature into our country, and along with that, of England's cold and meagre Arminianism into our pulpits. When our sermons began to be so tinged as to be transformed towards the likeness of papers in the Spectator, rather than of those noble compositions the homilies of our sister Church—it was then that the clergy lost the sympathies of our people, and lost their wonted ascendancy over them. We are far from making this the test of clerical perfection; and in matters of religion, as little as in other things, would we say of the *vox populi*, that it was *vox Dei*; but certain it is, that he who formed the Bible formed it in adaptation to the actual wants of human nature—to the fears and the demands of human consciences; and hence it is that the faithful exposition of Scripture doctrine meets with that sort of response in the feelings of the general multitude, which accounts in great part for the popularity that attaches to the preaching of the truth as it is in Jesus. This is the real principle of the popular acceptance which awaits our evangelical sermon, not that it is accommodated to the prejudices of the vulgar, but that it is accommodated to the felt exigencies of man's real condition; and when a sermon is changed from the sacred to the secular, it loses the benefit of all that congeniality with the tastes and the demands of the people which is founded on this accommodation. And so our author's period of light and of improvement was, in fact, the period of Scotland's greatest darkness. It was the middle age of our Church,

when, with the exception of a remnant—Willison, and Mac-laurin, and Gray, and Erskine, and Walker, and Witherspoon, described as the Puritans of their time, its ministrations fell powerless on the land, and the large proportion of the people fell away from the tabernacles of their forefathers. Of late there has begun a decided, I trust a progressive revival; but it is just the revival which our author, and many kindred with himself, would have stigmatized as a reappearance of the Antinomianism of other days—as the lapsing back again to the weakness and fanaticism of a more barbaric period.

But let us deal evenly with all parties. If they who are known as the moral preachers have failed, in that they have lost sight of the evangelical principles which can alone give the right spirit and the right efficacy to the exposition of duties, they who are termed the evangelical preachers have very generally failed, in that they have kept a great deal too much by the generalities of principle, and have refrained from that minute and varied exposition of the duties of life, for which, I am sure, they have no sanction whatever in the practice and example of the first teachers of Christianity. They tell us of sanctification in the gross, but they enter not into the details of sanctification. They assign to it its right place and position in Christianity, in as far as they represent it not to be a legal purchase, but a moral preparation for heaven; but still, throughout the whole of the discussion connected with this question, it is but holiness in the general that we hear of, and not holiness in its distinct and daily exhibitions. What we want, in short, from their hands, is sanctification more broken up as it were into its manifold diversities and details, suited to all the virtues of everyday life, and brought close to the business of men. Wanting this, many, very many, are the ordinary hearers who cannot discern the practical character of their preaching through the dim and technical nomenclature of their various explanations; and the people, while they acquiesce, and with pleasure too, as they would in a very pleasant song, when the minister tells them of sanctification, just for want of that explicitness and precision which I am now desiderating, nourish

their hearts in the treacherous complacency of a real and practical Antinomianism. There is a vast enlargement in the field of pulpit ministrations which has scarcely yet been entered on, and on which I would invite you to break forth. Never lose sight of the great doctrine, that we are justified by faith. Never lose sight of the righteousness of Christ as the alone meritorious ground of our acceptance with God. Never lose sight of the actual impotency of our depraved and fallen nature, insomuch that without Christ we can do nothing. Never lose sight of the doctrine, that it is only through Him strengthening us that we are enabled to do all things. But along with this, enter into description and detail in the account of these all things. Explain each of them, urge each of them, and bring forth, in all its rich variety, Christian duty, as suited to all the varieties of human experience. Tell us not merely of our dependence on the Spirit, but enter into far more familiar description and detail than I find often attempted now-a-days on the distinct fruits of the Spirit—the actual specific accomplishments and graces of the Christian character—the manifold variety of social as well as of sacred duties—the social made sacred by the infusion of gospel doctrine and of the gospel spirit throughout the whole staple of your ministrations.

I have already quoted in your hearing the example of the Apostles, and mentioned how, while in the first half of their epistles they are generally doctrinal, and that in the highest sense of the term, they branch forth into the minutely and familiarly practical at last. Proceed on the distinction between two classes of hearers—the converted and the unconverted. In reference to the latter, you should urge constantly their undone state by nature, the impossibility of recovering from it by any attempt on their part even to perform the very duties which, in all their fulness and all their minute variety, you are urging upon the other class—of the obstacles they set up in the way of their own salvation, if they go forth on the vain enterprise of establishing a righteousness of their own—of the only ground on which such a righteousness as constitutes our right can possibly be made out, of what Christ hath done, and what Christ

suffered even for the chief of sinners—of the voice of welcome and goodwill to all, which you, as one of the ambassadors of the New Testament, are entitled to lift up in the hearing of a general congregation—of justification being by faith alone, and a sanctification as indispensable as the former, being the fruit of the Spirit given to them who believe, and for which all are encouraged to pray. These are the principles of the doctrine, I would say the first principles of the oracles of God ; after which, if they have taken effect to any extent, so as to present you with the class of the converted as well as the unconverted, you, in reference to them, that is, to the converts of your congregation, are not to be constantly laying at the foundation—a charge to which many of our evangelical clergy stand peculiarly exposed—whereas, in the language of the Apostle, they should not be constantly employed in laying again the foundation, but should go on to perfection ; and so, while it is their duty to give to every man a word in season, and for the sake of the unconverted, to keep up a large ministration in their pulpits of the primary, and fundamental, and essential doctrines of the New Testament, doing this also, for the sake of the converted, that they may keep their first faith, and hold fast the beginning of their confidence ; yet the thing peculiarly suited to them is a large and explicit ministration on the details of holiness, the duties of faith and everyday life, and the obligations which lie upon their hearers in their relative stations as husbands, and wives, and children, and masters, and servants, and members of society ; and be assured that the conscientious filling up of all these stations, with the proper duties which belong to them, forms a most essential part of going onward even to perfection.

BOOK V.—CHAP. IV.

SANCTIFICATION.

THE PRAYER.

IN drawing near to Thee, O God, we would do especial homage to the moral perfections of Thy nature. Thou art a God of unspotted holiness, and sin is that accursed thing which Thou canst not pass by without a punishment, or without an expiation. Do Thou thoroughly impress us, O God, with the evil of it, and with Thine irreconcilable enmity thereto; and give us to know how deeply tainted our natures are with this sore and withering leprosy, that we may hail the tidings of deliverance by the gospel, and rejoice that there is a physician there. Be with us now and ever.—Amen.

There has been an extremely useless and uncalled for question agitated in the Church on the subject of repentance, which I would not have adverted to but for the practical mischief that might accrue from it to the work of Christianization. The question is, which of the two comes first—faith or repentance? Now, here is the evil that arises from a minister waiting to adjust in his mind the metaphysical order of these two. He may, on the one hand, think that it is not time for him to exhibit the overtures of reconciliation till a certain progress have been made in the contritions, and even in the amendments of repentance. Or, on the other hand, he may think that it is not yet time to call on the people, either for the purposes or the performances of the new life, till the whole orthodoxy have been established in their minds of the doctrine which respects the justification of the sinner, or the meritorious ground of his acceptance with God. In both these ways the practical outset of Christianity has been darkened and enfeebled. The minister feels an entanglement in his mind as to the mode of opening the subject, and the people are left in a state of perplexity as to what the distinct and obvious things are which they must begin with—fearing, on the one hand, to entertain a joyful confidence in the offered reconciliation of the gospel, because

they are not yet good enough; and fearing as much, on the other hand, to enter on the work of reformation, lest this should imply that in virtue of works and of obedience by themselves, they presume to make out a righteousness of their own—a claim and a title-deed for the inheritance of a blissful eternity.

It is thus that the metaphysical speculation of theologians as to the rationale of the process has embarrassed the initial attempts of Christian ministers actually to institute the process and set it agoing, and therefore I would say that whether or not they can adjust the order of precedency between faith and repentance, there is a distinct call upon them for preaching both, and that at the very outset of their addresses to the people on the subject. Tell them, even now, to break off their sins by righteousness, and tell them even now to rest on the righteousness of Christ as the alone ground of their acceptance with the Lawgiver, whom they have offended. The order of subjects in their practical ministrations is not to wait on the previous intellectual order in their minds respecting the antecedency of one step to another in the moral system of their hearers. For the purpose of giving effect to the process, it is not necessary that they should in fact analyze it, or even be able to analyze it. They have to follow scriptural example. If at one time they are afraid of putting repentance before faith, they should remember that historically John, the minister of repentance, was sent as a forerunner to Christ, and that even he set forth, as is recorded by the Evangelist Mark, on the work of his public ministry with the initiatory call of—Repent, and believe the gospel. If, on the other hand, they are afraid of putting faith before repentance, let them remember that in Scripture there is really no such metaphysical nicety attempted, and certainly no such nicety proceeded on; for though Paul adheres to the order of Mark when he defines the subject of his preaching to be repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, yet innumerable are the places in the Bible where the primary and ascendant influence is given to faith, as if it presided over the commencement as well as the whole progress of all in Christianity that is worthy of the name.

On the one hand, be assured that you will run into a great practical error in the conduct of your pulpit ministrations, if you abstain from urging on the people *instantly*; and whatever their religious belief and knowledge may be, that they should turn from that which is morally evil to that which is morally well; and you will run into an error as great, if not daily telling them at the same time that Christ is their only refuge, and His righteousness their only plea for acceptance with God—a plea which they are invited confidently to use and to rejoice in, from the earliest moment of your holding converse with them upon the subject.

But before I altogether quit the subject, let me offer what I hold to be the right metaphysical view which should be taken of the question. There must be the antecedency of a faith of some kind or other to every practical movement. Even anterior, long anterior, to a full and distinct understanding of the economy of redemption, there might be an incipient movement towards the whole subject, accompanied with the practical renunciation of gross and ordinary sins; but even this general earnestness, misdirected as it may be, presupposes a faith to this amount at least—a faith in the reality of the whole subject. A man whom you, with the whole force of your moral earnestness, attempt to dissuade from his thefts, or his impurities, or his deceptions of any sort, and whom perhaps to that extent you prevail upon, proceeds on the belief in his mind of a general something which makes it his highest duty and interest so to do. To that extent he has faith, and practice up to that extent it is your duty to urge upon him; and without waiting ere a more enlarged faith shall be formed in him, who knows but this may be faith in embryo—who knows but it may be that elemental principle compared by our Saviour to a grain of mustard-seed; and let us, therefore, join an energetic moral process to the business of Christianization, and look on the question, whether faith or repentance comes first, or whether you first turn from your sins or to the Saviour, to be nearly as ideal a one as whether, in turning round to the opposite point of the compass, you turn first to the south or from the north.

The one implies the other ; and instead of assigning any precedence in the matter, I would say of the two that they are contemporaneous.

BOOK V.—CHAP. VI.

BAPTISM.

THE PRAYER.

WE again implore, O God, the inspiration of Thy wisdom, and the continued protection of that all-powerful hand which upholds us continually. There is a diversity of operations in nature, yet it is Thou who workest all in all. There is a vast multiplicity of doings in human life, yet may we forget not that Thou art the Being with whom we have mainly and emphatically to do ; and make us sensible that we are short of what we ought to be, if we are not doing all things to Thy glory—not doing all things in the name of Jesus. Give us, O Lord, a lofty estimate of Thy law, that proportionally thereto we each may have a lowly estimate of ourselves, and that a sense of the unfulfilled requisitions under which we sit may shut us up to the faith and the following of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

I would recommend to you as an excellent subject for a sermon the moral lesson that might be drawn from baptism, when considered as the initiatory rite of the Christian religion. For, of what is it the symbol? Expressing it generally, it is the symbol of purification. But to give the virtue and strength of a practical application to it, it should be distinctly noticed, that it is not so much of purification from the guilt of sin as from the pollution of it. For, remember that the water of this ceremonial is a personal application, and be assured that the substantial thing represented by the water is a personal application also ; the one, as sprinkled on the body, is fitted to cleanse it from the defilements of material pollution ; the other, as sprinkled on the heart, is fitted to cleanse it from the defilements of all moral pollution. And we accordingly read of baptism in St. Peter as being realized in its proper sub-

stance and significance when associated, not with the putting away of the filth of the body, but with the answer of a good conscience to God ; and just as the moral baptism of John symbolized the higher and spiritual baptism of the Saviour, so may we be assured that the baptism by water, which is so distinctly personal, symbolized what is just as distinctly personal, the washing of regeneration, the renewing of the Holy Ghost.

The great lesson, then, to be enforced in a sermon on baptism is, that at the very entrance of Christianity, the renunciation of moral evil is held forth in full prospect and contemplation to all who assume the profession of the gospel. We are given to understand that the initial step of this religion is a renunciation, in purpose and desire at least, of all sin. The outward and ceremonial baptism, in fact, is the sign of this ; and from a sign it advances into a seal, when the party who submits to this ordinance is regarded, by the very act of doing so, as having come under an obligation to prosecute a strenuous departure from all iniquity. By giving a sermon on baptism this direction, and a most right and warrantable direction it surely is, you are enabled to hold forth in striking and impressive manifestation the moral character of the Christian faith ; and what with the tendencies of man to Antinomianism—what with the misunderstanding which exists as to the real design and object of our most holy religion—it is of importance that you should seize on every opportunity, and make use of every argument, for evincing what a virtuous and practical system that is of which you are the expounders, and should be the examples too.

A vast amount of misplaced zeal has been expended on the question, whether baptism should be by sprinkling or immersion ? Let me here, however, acknowledge, which I do most sincerely and cordially, that this magnification of small matters is very often associated with a worth and a weight of character and principle which are altogether sterling. There are thousands of the minuter controversies which I cannot sympathize in on either of the sides, and just for want of a clear or important

principle to hold by. But it is evident of the men who do enter very keenly into those disputations, that they feel as if they had got hold of something very clear and very important; and the strenuous, indomitable urgency wherewith they pursue the object their hearts are set upon, is the pledge, at least, of a deep religious earnestness. We meet with exemplifications of this in all ages of the Christian Church: among the Nonconformists of the seventeenth century—among the sticklers for sitting rather than kneeling at the Sacrament—among the protesters against the abomination of gown and surplice as vestments for clergymen—in short, among the advocates for or against a world of petty circumstantials, whose zeal in their respective callings I infinitely regret, because of the contempt which is thereby drawn on Christianity, but for whose conscientiousness in the urging and spreading of the same I at the same time have the most profound veneration and regard. If there be any geographical distinction between one part of Scotland and another in this respect, I would say that the interesting relics of the olden pertinaciousness and the olden zeal for little things, are to be found most abundantly in the west. I am sure I affirm this without the slightest feeling of reproach, or even of disrespect. Were there no other principle, indeed, than my love of antiquities, I should feel inclined to regard this peculiarity with the utmost toleration. But a far higher principle than this comes into operation; for, agreeably to the general law which I have just announced to you, I have found it associated in that part of our Establishment with so much of upright and pure and resolute assertion in behalf of great principles, that I with all my heart forgive the obstinacy of their adherence to small points, and retain in their favour a very large surplus of high and positive esteem to the bargain. For example, they have been all along the sturdy champions of nonpluralism in the Church, of residence in parishes, of sacredness in Sabbath observation, of the cause of Christianity at home, by their incessant efforts to enlarge the church accommodation, and of the cause of Christianity abroad, by the support which they have ever rendered both to Bible

and missionary and colonial societies. After this goodly enumeration of great and noble services, the occasional littlenesses wherewith they at times may be associated are like spots in the sun ; and I am sure ought to be viewed in no other light than with the most good-natured indulgence, just as one views the feebleness or peculiarities of some aged friend, for whose substantial worth at the same time we have a just veneration. Accordingly, it is not within the limits of the Bothwell region, that land of sturdy principle, signalized by the exploits and the martyrdoms of our covenanting forefathers, where I would attempt the slightest innovation on their ancient forms, however harmless, or even to a certain extent beneficial ; seeing there are many there who, on the proposition of any change, however insignificant, will resist you by saying they will never consent to let down even the smallest pin of the tabernacle. There was an attempt some time ago to introduce the organ into the Scottish Kirk—it was the most unwise of all enterprises to attempt it in the west. Since that the abomination of a painted window in one of the churches was obtruded on the public gaze ; but it could not be permitted to stand another Sabbath in the west. To read the line in psalm-singing, is one of the venerable and antique peculiarities of our land ; and the abolition of it met with far the sturdiest resistance in the west. The antipathy to paper in the pulpit, which used to be in force all over Scotland, is still in greatest force and inveteracy in the west. I state not this for the purposes of levity or ridicule, but of presenting to your notice the very peculiar conjunction which I have just now remarked upon between a zeal for great principles, mixed up, as it often is, in the history of the Church, with a zeal and tenaciousness about the merest bagatelles. The west is the very quarter to which I look most hopefully for the revival of our Church and the maintenance of our highest moral and religious interests ; and however amused therefore with the innocent peculiarities to which I have just now adverted, it cannot dispossess the veneration and serious regard wherewith I look at that portion of our Church—very much, in fact, as our General Assembly looked at the question

which broke out about the tables, and finally disposed of it—when our venerable mother, sitting in her collective wisdom, was called on to decide the quarrel that had broken out among her children, she allowed me, the one party, to continue the table-service in the way I had found to be most convenient; but, instead of laying aught like severity or rebuke upon the other, she, while disappointing them of their plea, dismissed them at the same time with a look of the most benignant complacency.

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I should like you to estimate soundly and rightly the precise argumentative effect of the scriptural reasons that might be adduced for infant baptism. In the first place, there is an ultra demand for an express and positive appointment in the Bible for many things ere we have a complete warrant for the doing of them; and they who make this demand in the present controversy lay much stress on there being no absolute ordination in behalf of infant baptism. But we might very well reiterate upon them, that if there be no express ordination in scripture for the baptism of infants, as little is there any ordination so express as to be exclusive for the baptism of adults. So far, then, we are upon equal ground; and if they would lay upon us the *onus* of an absolute proof for the lawfulness of the practice, we have just as good a title to lay on them the *onus* of an absolute proof for its unlawfulness. But we have very strong scriptural argument for repelling this charge. If unlawful, why was it so instituted in the parallel rite of circumcision? In passing from the initiatory rite of the one economy to the initiatory rite of the other, nothing, I am sure, could be so natural as to assimilate them in all the circumstances which were not expressly forbidden. The absence of any such prohibition leaves us in possession of very strong scriptural argument for the practice as observed now by the great majority of Christians. Surely, if infant baptism were a bad or a wrong thing, the later scriptures would have interposed a caveat against our falling into it, and more especially as the older scriptures had a direct tendency to mislead

us into such an observance. In all matters not expressly repealed, or not necessarily superseded by the overthrow of the Jewish economy, the analogy of the two dispensations forms a strong argument for the authority of any practice countenanced by the former, though not expressly enjoined by the later, and a still stronger argument for its innocence.

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“ But mark how it fared with the posterity of Abraham. He, the first Hebrew, believed and was circumcised; and it was laid down for a statute in Israel, that all his children should be circumcised in infancy. In like manner, the first Christians believed and were baptized; and though there be no statute laid down upon the subject, yet is there no violation of any contrary statute, when all our children are baptized in infancy. At the origin of the two institutions the order of succession is the same with both. The thing signified took precedence of the sign. Along the stream of descent which issued from the first of them, this order was reversed, and by an express authority too, so as that the sign took precedence of the thing signified: And so has it been the very general practice with the stream of descent that issued from the second of them; and if the want of express authority be pled against us, we reply that this is the very circumstance which inclines us to walk in the footsteps of the former dispensation. Express authority is needed to warrant a change, but it is not needed to warrant a continuation. It is this very want of express authority, we think, which stamps on the opposite system a character of presumptuous innovation. When once bidden to walk in a straight line, it does not require the successive impulse of new biddings to make us persevere in it. But it would require a new bidding to justify our going off from the line into a track of deviation. The first Christians believed and were baptized; Abraham believed and was circumcised. He transmitted the practice of circumcision to infants; we transmit the practice of baptism to infants. There is no satisfactory historical evidence of our practice having ever crept in—the innovation of a later period in the history of the Church. Had the mode of infant baptism

sprung up as a new piece of sectarianism, it would not have escaped the notice of the authorship of the times. But there is no credible written memorial of its ever having entered amongst us as a novelty; and we have therefore the strongest reason for believing, that it has come down in one uncontrolled tide of example and observation from the days of the Apostles. And if they have not, in the shape of any decree or statutory enactment that can be found in the New Testament, given us any authority for it—they at least, had it been wrong, and when they saw that whole families of discipleship were getting into this style of observation, would have interposed and lifted up the voice of their authority against it. But we read of no such interdict in our Scriptures; and, in these circumstances, we hold the inspired teachers of our faith to have given their testimony in favour of infant baptism, by giving us the testimony of their silence.”

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“This affords, we think, something more than a dubious glimpse into the question that is often put by a distracted mother, when her babe is taken away from her—when all the converse it ever had with the world amounted to the gaze upon it of a few months, or a few opening smiles, which marked the dawn of felt enjoyment; and ere it had reached perhaps the lisp of infancy, it, all unconscious of death, had to wrestle through a period of sickness with its power, and at length to be overcome by it. Oh, it little knew what an interest it had created in that home where it was so passing a visitant—nor, when carried to its early grave, what a tide of emotion it would raise among the few acquaintances it left behind it! On it, too, baptism was impressed as a seal, and as a sign it was never falsified. There was no positive unbelief in its little bosom—no resistance yet put forth to the truth—no love at all for the darkness rather than the light; nor had it yet fallen into that great condemnation which will attach to all who perish because of unbelief—that their deeds are evil. It is interesting to know that God instituted circumcision for the infant children of Jews, and at least suffered baptism for

the infant children of those who profess Christianity. Should the child die in infancy, the use of baptism as a sign has never been thwarted by it ; and may we not be permitted to indulge a hope so pleasing, as that the use of baptism as a seal remains in all its entireness—that He who sanctioned the affixing of it to a babe, will fulfil upon it the whole expression of this ordinance : And when we couple with this the known disposition of our great Forerunner—the love that He manifested to children on earth—how He suffered them to approach His person—and, lavishing endearment and kindness upon them in the streets of Jerusalem, told His disciples that the presence and company of such as these in heaven formed one ingredient of the joy that was set before Him,—tell us if Christianity do not throw a pleasing radiance around an infant's tomb ? And should any parent feel softened by the touching remembrance of a light that twinkled a few short months under his roof, and at the end of its little period expired—we cannot think that we venture too far when we say, that he has only to persevere in the faith and in the following of the gospel, and that very light will again shine upon him in heaven. The blossom which withered here upon its stalk, has been transplanted there to a place of endurance ; and it will then gladden that eye which now weeps out the agony of an affection that has been sorely wounded ; and in the name of Him who, if on earth, would have wept along with them, do we bid all believers to sorrow not even as others which have no hope, but to take comfort in the thought of that country where there is no sorrow and no separation.*

Oh, when a mother meets on high
The babe she lost in infancy,
Hath she not then, for pains and fears,
The day of wo, the watchful night—
For all her sorrow, all her tears,
An over-payment of delight ?”

* The two last paragraphs are to be found in “ Lectures on the Epistle to the Romans,” pp. 225, 226, 233-235.

BOOK V.—CHAP. VII.

THE LORD'S SUPPER.

THE PRAYER.

MAY Thy Spirit, O God, guide us into all truth ; and lest we should go astray in our inquiry after it, may we remember Thine own saying, that Thy word is truth. May we not, in quest of it, ascend in fancy to heaven, and think that we are to fetch down its secrets by a direct conveyance from Thine upper sanctuary. Neither may we descend into the earth, or think we are to find it among the darkling speculations of Thy creatures here below. But may we make diligent search in Thy word, which is nigh unto us ; and as Thou rejoicest to meet the man that worketh righteousness, do Thou rejoice the hearts of those that are seeking after Thee in Scripture by the fulness of Thy promised manifestations.

The Lord's Supper serves but as a sign when viewed merely as a commemorative ordinance. It represents a great historical transaction, the death of Christ ; and even apart from any particular view of the design and efficacy of that death, still it is fitted to awaken gratitude when connected with the thought, that that death was subservient in some general way to the welfare of mankind. But the symbols of the Lord's Supper remind us of something far more special than this. The bread represents the body that was broken, the wine represents the blood that was shed for us ; and though still making but a sign of that ordinance, yet, as signifying the doctrine of our atonement, it holds out a sensible exhibition fitted to recall this great truth, and to strengthen our faith in it, and so, through the medium of this faith, to awaken a gratitude far more distinct and significant and lively than any cold generality can possibly inspire.

But still confining ourselves to the use of this ordinance as a sign, let us consider what more is represented by it, and the exhibition of which by symbol may tell on the moral affections and purposes of the beholders just as if an exhibition were

made in statement. When made in the latter way, or by statement, then it is literally and properly a sermon; when made in the former way, or by symbol, then it is a sermon by action—and certain it is that in this way it may be a most impressive sermon, and telling us, too, more things than one. The great object, no doubt, the prime exhibition made by this ordinance, is Jesus Christ evidently set forth crucified before us. The Lord's Supper, as I have already said, is a most vivid representation of the doctrine of the atonement. It may be called a representation of it in picture; and while there is not necessarily anything in a sensible or symbolical exhibition which ought to corrupt or complicate this great truth, there is everything in it, from the constitution of our nature, powerfully and affectingly to impress us. Accordingly, I know not a season of greater importance in the simple annals of a parish than the coming round of this great public solemnity; a season that may be consecrated to the best and highest objects of the Christian ministry. There needs be nothing superstitious, or fanciful, or weak in the deeper solemnity that is visible on that impressive occasion—founded, as it may altogether be, on a deeper and more realizing sense of the great sacrifice that was made for the sins of the world.

But still restricting ourselves to the use of the Lord's Supper as a sign, there is more represented by it than I have yet set forth to you. It not only exhibits our atonement by the death of Christ, but the ordinance, both in itself and in its circumstances, exhibits the perfect freedom wherewith the benefits of this death are held out to all. I am sensible that this freedom may, in one view, be said to be limited and guarded, and actually is so at what is called fencing the tables; and this I shall more especially consider when I come to treat of the ordinance, not as a sign, which I am doing at present, but as a seal, which I shall do afterwards. Abstractly, then, from the limitation to which I have now adverted, and the nature of which I shall consider afterwards, the partakers of this ordinance come there in virtue of an invitation sounded forth by the minister. He is entitled to say, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to

the waters." He makes a universal call, and proclaims a universal welcome; and when, in obedience to this call, they do seat themselves at the table, the transaction which takes place between them is one of simple giving on the one side, of receiving on the other. The general call at length passes into a special application. Each stretches forth his hand to the elements for himself, and makes a special application of them to himself—each makes the appointed and appropriate use of the bread and the wine; and you may well assure them that they are not more welcome to these memorials of the atonement, than they are to the benefits of that body and blood which are represented by the memorials. In other words, you may, on this affecting occasion, hold forth to them the lesson of appropriation—assuring each, that he has a warrant for receiving, by faith, the antitypes of this sacrament, as well as the types or symbols which are employed in it, that he may view the body which was broken for the sins of the world as broken individually for him, and the blood that was shed for the remission of sins as shed specially and individually for his sins; and thus, too, by a pure act of giving and receiving, the doctrine of free grace is embodied in this most speaking and significant of all the ordinances. The minister gives, the communicant takes. Eternal life is a gift on the one side, and faith is the acceptance or the laying hold of it on the other. Christ is said to give repentance and the remission of sins. Men are said to "receive forgiveness," to "receive the atonement," to "receive power to become the children of God."

This last quotation suggests another of the important lessons held forth by the Supper of the Lord when viewed as a sign. The bread and the wine which are there used are not only the memorials of our atonement—they are also the symbols of our spiritual nourishment. As the body is strengthened by the use of the literal elements, so is the soul strengthened for the fatigue of obedience, and the healthy exercises of all its functions, by the counterpart realities to these elements. We read in Scripture of the bread of life which cometh down from heaven, and we read also of the living water, under whose fer-

tilizing influence all the fair and pleasant fruits of righteousness are made to grow in the character of believers. This spake He of the Holy Spirit given to those who believe. So that, while engaged in this most affecting of all our Christian ceremonies, there is another most refreshing and strengthening view which may be urged by the minister on the heart of his communicants. He may tell them of God's free Spirit, as free, in fact, as the forgiveness is. He may press home upon them the lesson, that He who hath given them His own Son will also with Him freely give them all things. He may represent to them, that they are just as welcome to the spiritual influence enveloped, as it were, in the symbols which they are using, as they are to the reconciliation enveloped in these symbols. If like to be overwhelmed because of the difficulties and dangers which lie in the way of their steadfast maintenance of the Christian profession, he may, on this ground, expatiate on the great practical security which they have in the blessed declaration, that the Holy Spirit is given to them who ask it. In a word, he might make this ordinance the vehicle for exhibiting anew the salvation which is by Christ in its two leading particulars—salvation from future wrath, because that wrath has been already discharged on the head of an illustrious sufferer—salvation from present wickedness, because, after He died, He rose again and obtained gifts for men, even for the rebellious.

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Some history on the subject of Transubstantiation is given in the text-book which I do not feel is necessary or important enough to occupy your time with. I would scarcely advise your reading the controversies upon this subject, as I hold them to be little better than an idle expenditure of time and strength. It figured very prominently in the theological literature of a former era, and even still is sometimes viewed in a venerable exegesis transmitted from one professor to another in our divinity halls. I have, however, detached it from my list of theses on the subject, and as far, then, as I am concerned, it is now lying on the shelf, and I will certainly not disturb its slumbers.

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The second opinion is, Consubstantiation, not important to doctrine, but exceedingly important in the history of doctrine, or rather in the history of the human mind, evincing how slowly it is that the absurdest errors of antiquity, if only long established, give way before the rationalities of a more enlightened period.

Perhaps this lingering of the old prejudice in the mind of Luther, this very gradual and difficult recess, even in the strongest understanding, from error that had become inveterate because consecrated by antiquity and the authority of names, is one of the strongest examples that can be alleged in the history of the human mind of the prodigious tenacity wherewith a false principle or false proposition, once it has got long into general establishment, keeps its ground in the world. The very boldness, and independence, and originality of character which belonged to this great reformer, all tend to enhance the conclusion, and to confirm the more every apprehension which I have felt on the hopelessness of enlightening men all at once, by any demonstration, however irresistible, if directed against either the doctrine and usages of the Church or the institutions of the State. I might, in conformity with this principle, avow that I am not nearly so sanguine as I wont to be of either of these bodies politic, civil or ecclesiastical, providing for their own endurance by the spontaneous recovery of themselves from such abuses, as if suffered to aggravate and to ripen will infallibly bring both the one and the other to an overthrow. For example, I am far more afraid that the pauperism of England will at length shake the framework of its society to pieces, than I have any hope that by the adoption of right views, and carrying them into safe and gradual operation, the Government of England will at length clear away this sore ulcer from the commonwealth. I am greatly more apprehensive of its being cleared away in the effervescence of an anarchy than in the march of wise and pacific legislation. In like manner, though the system of tithes has come now in good earnest under the notice and revision of Parliament, I do feel apprehensive that it may have come too late for the Church of Ireland. And

besides, you will observe, in perfect keeping with the sentiments which I now utter, it was not the demonstrations of the economists which made Government take up the matter with such determination and closeness of attention as they seem now to be bestowing on the question. It is not at the call of English reasoners, but at the compulsion of Irish pikemen that the matter has now come to be entertained, giving us most emphatically to perceive what the gross elements are which act most powerfully on the functionaries whether of the municipal or of the State administration—how much it is, in fact, that the forces of immediate and felt necessity, and how little it is that the lights of intellect have sway or precedency over the affairs of men.

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Here follows some argumentation on the subject of Consubstantiation which surely at this time of day may well be spared. I think we need give ourselves just as little trouble with the arguments for or against Consubstantiation, as we need do with the argument for or against the concision mentioned by Paul in his Epistle to the Philippians. I shall only say in allusion to what is mentioned by our author, the indulgence shown to the tenet of Consubstantiation is very different from that which is shown to the doctrine of Transubstantiation. I see no reason for a difference in the treatment of these two, nor do I comprehend how it is that the one should be looked at with complacency while the other is traduced as a monstrous, nay, even as a damnable error. There is a vehemence and a virulence on this subject which I cannot sympathize with ; and if there be such an accordance in all things essential between us and the Lutherans as leads us to overlook the palpable absurdity in their creed, let us not give up the hope, that with men of another denomination there may also be such a substantial unity of principle, even though we know it not, between us and men of the same faith with Pascal, and Fenelon, and Marseilles' good bishop, and such men as Anselm and St. Bernard, the worthies of a remoter and darker age.

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On the subject of fitness or unfitness for participation in the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, I would have you to remark, in the first place, a certain class of persons who do not present themselves for admission at all, and who arrogate a sort of merit because of their modesty in thus refraining, and that on the plea that they are not yet good enough. I am neither speaking of the openly profligate on the one hand, of whose inadmissibility there is no question, neither am I speaking on the other of the melancholy, who are altogether and honestly in earnest on the subject, and who keep back under a mournful sense of their disqualifications ; but I speak of a very numerous class distinct from these, and chiefly to be met with in towns, who do attend church all the year, but refrain from the services of the Communion Sabbath, because they are not just good enough for that, and this not under any sense of despondency or dismay on the subject, but with a certain wholeheartedness, nay, even complacency, because of the principle which they fancy themselves complying with, and the homage they conceive themselves rendering to the sacredness and solemnity of the ordinance, by not daring to approach till they have become better than they are. Now, I would not charge it upon those people that they are living in the neglect of a commanded duty ; for commanded duty though it be, it is a duty which will but aggravate the condemnation of those who enter on the performance of it without the right and requisite preparation. This, then, is not the direction in which I would assail them, and yet I would like to dislodge the evident complacency which they are cherishing within them, and that because they have not added the guilt of hypocrisy to the habit of alienation from one of the most solemnly bequeathed injunctions of the Saviour, and one of the most general and firmly established observances of a Christian land. I think that a precisely apposite consideration wherewith to ply the people of this class, is, that if unfit for the sacrament, they are unfit for heaven ; and whereas they are ascribing to themselves a kind of merit in abstaining from the ordinance, for which they humbly conceive they are unqualified, they should be told that they

are acquiescing in a state of moral distance from all of that grace and goodness by which they are made meet for the inheritance of the saints. The point to urge with them, is not the duty of coming forward to the sacrament, but the duty of putting themselves, and that *instantly*, in a condition of readiness and rightness for so coming forward. They should be told that the man who lives a willing exile from the table of the Lord, in fact lives a willing exile from all the prospects and preparations of eternity. The man who is unfit for companying with the disciples of Christ in one of His appointed ordinances, is unfit for converse and companionship with Christ Himself; and they should be told to beware, lest by glorying in their abstaining from an ordinance which they fear, and perhaps honestly fear and feel that their footsteps would profane, they may not, in fact, be glorying in a general irreligion of character, and contentedly remaining of such a habit on earth as will render their admission to heaven when they die an impossibility.

But passing from this class, who are too little adverted to in the treatment of this question, we now consider those who actually do partake of this ordinance, or who meditate such a participation. The object of fencing the tables is to exclude the unworthy; and communicants are called on seriously to examine themselves, in order to ascertain that worthiness. I have repeatedly said to you already, what I only now therefore will state briefly once more, that the question of worthiness hinges not on the past history, but on the present purposes. It should be made to depend not on the question—What have I been formerly? but—What do I intend now? And this is the time for a minister not merely pressing home upon the people an upright and honest aim to be all that the Saviour would have them to be, but it is also the time for making full, explicit, unreserved statement of all that Christianity requires, whether in the way of surrender or of performance; for, you will observe, that even though you should gain the acquiescence of your hearers that a *bona fide* resolution to walk as a Christian in all time coming was indispensable to a worthy communion at the table of the Lord, yet with low conceptions of

practical Christianity, even though cherishing such a resolution, they may be short of the mark ; they may hold it enough that they share in all the decencies of civil observation, and take part in the common ordinances of the gospel, and without, therefore, aught either in respect of aim or in respect of acquisition after the high spiritual obedience of the gospel, its non-conformity to the world, its devotion to the things of faith and of eternity—without aught of this, I say, in their character or composition at all, they may go confidently forward with great satisfaction to themselves, and without the slightest misgiving of conscience on the subject, and yet lapse back again into the same earthly, alienated creatures that they were.

I have, therefore, always considered the sacramental opportunity as a highly proper season for unfolding practical Christianity in the extent of its obligations, and that by way of letting those who purpose to be communicants understand what the length and breadth of the vow is which they contract, and will be called upon to pay—what the amount of the profession is which they are called upon to substantiate ; and so such topics as—Better not to vow, than to vow and not to pay ; He who sitteth down to build a tower, should first count the cost thereof ; He who cometh to Christ, must forsake all ; Why call ye him Lord, Lord, and do not the things which he saith ?—these, I say, form very admirable topics on which to make your solemn and searching appeal to the consciences of the people on the coming round of this great periodic solemnity.

Such texts as these will furnish you with excellent materials for what is commonly called the fencing of the tables, which, agreeably to a principle I have often laid down, should proceed, I think, more upon an appeal to the consciousness than upon an appeal to the memory of your hearers, more upon their sense of what they feel and meditate at present than upon their retrospect of the performances of years which are past ; at the same time, urging them strongly on the exceeding length and breadth of those commandments which enter into the obedience of the gospel, and also bidding them beware of coming forward on the impulse of a sudden or hasty resolution, charging them,

perhaps for weeks before the celebration of the ordinance, that they should make their transition to a new life of Christianity, in all its peculiarity and extent a matter of strong and fixed determination, with frequent appeals to Him who is the searcher of hearts, that He would save them from all that is rash or delusive in this great undertaking, and frequent supplications to Him who is also the dispenser of all spiritual blessings, that He may perfect strength in their weakness, and give them power to become the children of God.

But there is another and a distinct class of hearers who have a very near interest in the services of this great periodic festival—I mean those who labour under a sense of discouragement and despondency, who are in great heaviness because they feel themselves unable and unworthy of such a participation, who are oppressed by a consciousness both of their exceeding guilt and exceeding infirmity of purpose and principle, and tremble lest by putting forth their hand to the elements of the Supper, they put forth a sacrilegious hand on that which their very touch they fear will contaminate and profane. Why, there are some whose religious anxieties are regularly awakened and lighted up by the recurrence of this occasion; and it is the part of those who are appointed to speak to every man a word in season, and more especially to speak a seasonable word to the weary and heavy laden, to know how they should address themselves to hearers of this peculiar cast and character, lest any should forbid himself whom God hath not forbidden, and pervert an institution which holds out the aspect of welcome and invitation to the mourners, pervert it to the deepening of their scruples and the sorer aggravation of their despair.

Now, in overcoming the scruples of this class, and in bringing that suasion to bear upon them which might carry them over the barrier of their fears, and filling your mouth with arguments so as to countervail the despondency of their conscious guilt and conscious weakness, the best arguments you can employ are those identical ones which set forth the freeness of the gospel, its adaptation to every want of our fallen nature, and the universal welcome it holds out even to those most sunk in de-

pravity and the deepest and the most desperate of all in the abyss of condemnation. This is another specimen of the Lord's Supper as being rich in topics for many a substantial and impressive sermon, affording as it does, in fact, a proper place and occasion for preaching the comforts as well as the requirements of Christianity. It is this, in fact, which gives such a high religious importance to this great festival, for, in point of fact, hearers in general are greatly more awake than on ordinary Sabbaths to the demonstrations of the pulpit; and certain it is, that the most seasonable of these demonstrations are those which serve the purposes of encouragement on the one hand, and of rebuke or warning on the other; and that, not encouragement alone to approach the table of the Saviour, but more elementary still, encouragement to enter into confiding fellowship with the Saviour Himself—and that, not warning alone from an ordinance which the wilfully impenitent do but violate by their presence, and so but aggravate the severity of their coming judgment, but more general and elementary still, warning all men that Christ, the Lord of the ordinance, however accessible to the species at large on their coming for mercy to pardon and grace to help them, will refuse His friendship and His presence to all who would grasp at the mercy while they fling the grace away from them—even that grace which teaches as well as enables man to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, and righteously, and godly in the world.

But to return to the melancholy and despairing religionist, who, thrown into more vivid apprehension and alarm at the coming round of every communion Sabbath, perverts, by the unhappy peculiarities of his temperament and his views, what ought to be a season of gladness into a season of deepest spiritual dejection and distress. In reasoning with such, you will find by far the most effectual considerations are just the essential simplicities of the gospel of Jesus Christ. You may point to the sensible memorials of their atonement on the table of the sacrament, and assure them, with the utmost truth and tenderness, that there is nothing there which should scare them away—that the bread is but the symbol of that body which

was broken for the sins of the world, and for their sins, had they but the confidence to appropriate to themselves what one and all in the world have the fullest warrant to appropriate; that the wine is but the symbol of that blood which was shed for the sins of many, and shed for their sins would they but do what many, and those the worst of sinners, have done, and they might do, would they venture the whole weight of their dependence on that foundation which God Himself has laid in Zion. In a word, you argue them out of their fears in the very way by which you would overture to men in general the blessings of the gospel, and press the assurance upon them, that whatever their guilt and whatever their depravity, there is provision to which the most worthless of them are welcome, for cancelling all the guilt, for regenerating all the depravity. You tell them that their past iniquity should form no barrier across their path of entry into the communion table, for the body of Christ hath borne it all, the blood of Christ hath effaced it all. You should further tell them, that their own wretched impotency even to purpose aright, but far more, to perform aright, should form no such barrier; for the same bread and wine which set forth so significantly the atonement that has been made for their past sins, as significantly set forth the strength by which they are enabled to prosecute, and at length to perfect, their future obedience. And so the language you employ to this class is the unqualified language of invitation and welcome. You should cheer them on to the ordinance in the very way that you would cheer them on to a rejoicing fellowship with Him who is the Master of the ordinance. You state in their hearing the freeness and fulness of the gospel, you demolish the plea on which they keep back by analyzing it in its two leading particulars, and demonstrating the insufficiency first of the one and then of the other. Their guilt you refuse to entertain as a plea, for you can tell them of an overpassing remedy for their guilt, set forth in visible representation on the very table which awakens their sensitive and superstitious horrors. Their weakness you refuse to entertain as a plea, for all who will may, at the hand of Him who presides over the assembly

of a communion Sabbath, receive power as well as pardon, and so be sustained in all the toils of virtue and amid all the temptations which beset its path.

Neither the guilt nor the weakness—both of which so oppress the hearts of the desponding hearers—neither of these is a right obstacle in the way of this participation. The only competent obstacle is one which they have no share in. It is a mental reservation on the side of sin and of the world; it is that secret compromise which men would fain make between their own will and the will of the Saviour; it is, in fact—if we dare make use of that most convenient, though, in many orthodox ears, that most obnoxious word—it is the blinking of the real conditions of the gospel, and in virtue of which we conform to its overtures of a full pardon for sin and a full power of obedience, by the full determination to perform all which it bids us do, and to forsake all which it bids us relinquish. The consciousness of any latent duplicity of this sort, that forms a legitimate reason why any hearer should keep himself away; or if the minister know this to be his real moral state, that also is a reason why he should warn him away. Now, really this is not the reason which operates in general with the perplexed and melancholy inquirer. There are many such who would part with a thousand worlds if they had them to be what they ought—who would make any sacrifice to be right with God—who, to rid their minds of the gloomy and desolate apprehensions by which they are all the year long haunted and agonized, would not think the surrender of all that is dear to nature too great or painful a renunciation. Now, to such as these, you have nothing to proclaim but unqualified comfort—you may tell them, that but for their own sullen and suspicious hearts, there is really not the breadth of a straw between them and their salvation—that God is beckoning them in the gospel to His reconciled presence through the open door of His Son's mediatorship—that the Son Himself, if they but understood His attitude and His words, is knocking at the door of their hearts, and saying all to woo them into confidence—that goodwill smiles upon them from heaven, and

that if they see it not, it is only because they look through the medium of their own diseased imagination. You must labour, by the assurances of the New Testament, to drive in that sullen front of resistance which, perhaps for months, or even for years, you may find to be impracticable; and when the solemnity of another and another sacramental celebration comes round, however vivid or overwhelming the fears may be which are thereby excited, you, on the principle that the road to the communion table is not narrower than the road to heaven, should do your utmost to overbear the scruples of the disconsolate mourner, and bring no other texts than those of kindness and most unrestricted invitation to bear upon them.

Before I take final leave of this subject in my present course—for sensible I am, that in the extension and more thorough rectification of future courses, there is the greatest room for enlargement, or at least improvement, not on this solemn topic alone, but on all which I have brought before you—there is one question more connected with the administration of the sacraments which I should like at least to touch upon for a moment. It is a question, I am sensible, of great difficulty and great delicacy, and has been productive of the utmost uneasiness and distress with clergymen of tender consciences—I mean the principles on which they should judge of the admissibility of men to either of the two; that is, on what precise ground they should allow either parents to become sponsors for their children in baptism, or to participate with others in the peculiar services of a communion Sabbath.

There is no difficulty in regard to certain palpable delinquencies of character which do, by the general practice of all the clergymen and judicatories of our Church, infer exclusion from the Church's ordinances. To protect the sacraments from gross and unquestionable profanation, such as would scandalize every Christian heart, and even bring down the contempt of the world, there are certain definite criminalities into which if a man have fallen, it would be the general practice, both in and out of the Establishment in Scotland, to disqualify him either for presenting his children to the waters of holy bap-

tism, or sharing in the solemnities of a sacramental Sabbath. Of this class there is no question—their unfitness for Christian fellowship may be read and known of all men. The clearness of the matter in their case precludes all controversy. And could we just have the same precise and satisfactory evidence of what that is which constitutes the positively good, as of what that is which constitutes the positively bad, all perplexity, and all the distress associated with that perplexity, would be henceforth done away.

There is no difficulty as to how we should proceed with all whom we know to be criminals, which is simply to exclude them—and there should be as little difficulty with all whom we know to be Christians, which is simply to admit them. But there is a vast intermediate number—I have no doubt myself they constitute the vast majority of the species, not merely out of Christendom, but within its limits, who are neither criminals nor Christians, who are fair and respectable, and who can be convicted neither of profligacy nor of fraud—and yet whom you have not only no reason to believe are spiritual men, but of whom you have the decided conviction that they are not so. These make up the vast majority of people in every land—I will even go so far as to say, that they make up the vast majority of communicants in every country of Christendom. In our own country I feel assured they do. I feel no hesitation in avowing it as my conviction, that far the greater number of those who have baptism administered to their children, and the elements of the Lord's Supper administered to themselves, are not Christians in the full sense and significancy of the term. The palpable, the undeniable fact has given an infinity of distress to a number of tender conscientious clergymen; and the question is, how to clear our way among the ambiguities of the question which relates to the admissibility or non-admissibility of men to the sacraments—a question of extremely difficult solution, and one which I am far from thinking that we shall soon succeed in carrying a uniformity either of sentiment or of practice thereupon.

BOOK V.—CHAP. VIII.

CONDITION OF MAN AFTER DEATH.

THE PRAYER.

THOU, O God, art a Governor among the nations and families of the world. Thou reignest supreme in nature and history: and the moral world, with the character and fortune of its innumerable spirits, is all Thine own. May we bear a constant respect not alone to Thy power of overruling the history, but to Thy power of sanctifying the heart of each individual; and grant, Almighty Father, that through the aids of Thy divine grace we may be kept steadfast and immovable on the way to heaven.

I beg you distinctly to remark the two principles on either of which a theological system may be constructed: by proceeding on a certain chronological order, the one on the chronological order of the Divine administration, the other on the chronological order of that human process which is described by man in his passage from the dimness of nature to the full light of the gospel, its prosperous sanctification, and at length its blissful consummation in eternity. I prefer the latter myself; and I think, besides presenting the various topics in a more natural succession, even according to the succession of human interests, and of the actual states which follow each other in the progress of man's religious history—besides this recommendation, I say, it has also to plead in its favour the greater humility and philosophic modesty of the procedure. When compared with the other systems, it is like proceeding by analysis instead of proceeding by synthesis. Rather than commence with the lofty and recondite principles of the Trinity, and Predestination, and the purposes of God—rather than commence with these as the fountainhead or first principles of the whole theological demonstration, I do hold it vastly better that we should grope our way from one surmising of nature to another, till, on the footsteps of a natural process of inquiry, we have been led to feel a sense of nature's deficiencies—to

explore the evidence for the Christian religion—to enter on the contents of its now ascertained revelation—to begin with the doctrine which nature and Scripture alike depone to, even the depravity of man—a doctrine which has been well affirmed to be the basis of Christianity ;—proceeding from that, to enter on the counterpart remedies of the gospel, its atoning sacrifice, its sanctifying grace—to assume for the time the divinity both of the Son and of the Spirit, as in fact giving a mightier emphasis to the truths both of atonement and sanctification, but to reserve the scientific establishment both of this sacred mystery and of the transcendental doctrine of predestination to ulterior parts of the course, and then diverging though we have done from the first system, both at the commencement and along the whole progress of our expositions, falling in with it at the conclusion, and finishing just as it does with the final issues of that wondrous scheme by which men, in the darkness and depravity of nature, are restored to eternal blessedness and honour amid the companies and the choirs of God's unfallen family.

On the subject of the eternity of future punishment I do not want you to hold with me the language of a stern dogmatist ; but sure I am that the cause of practical religion will suffer greatly in your hands, if you gloss over or reduce the plain literalities of Scripture on the awful question. We cannot hesitate a moment as to what the distinct understanding of every plain unsophisticated man must be in regard to the sense and doctrine of the Bible on the matter at issue. There can be no misconceiving that ; and without repeating its affirmations, I must say that, once you extenuate and dilute them, you inflict a blow on practical religion of which perhaps you are not aware. For, only think what the great, the mischievous delusion is with the majority of the species. It is not in general that they disbelieve in the realities of a future state ; neither is it that they purpose not, some time or other, to provide against them. Perhaps, in every Christian land, every nine out of ten have an indefinite but vague purpose of turning round and betaking themselves in good earnest to the work of preparation ere they die ; but they cannot and will not put

forth the resolution of entering on this decisive movement yet. They are for postponing it a little longer and a little longer; and it is just this habit of perpetually adjourning the question, of shifting it forward, by succeeding intervals, to a more convenient season, of quieting the present by a resolve which shall take effect at some time or somewhere in the distant futurity before them;—it is this, I say, which shuffles religion onward by little and little away from even being seriously felt or seriously proceeded on; and thus, on this ruinous principle, are men borne onward through life, till death comes upon them like a whirlwind, and they at length find themselves cheated out of their eternity.

Now, what is the effect that the doctrine of the non-eternity of hell-torments would leave upon human nature? Just to carry the principle of postponement across the barrier of death altogether—just to make it shoot ahead of the termination of our mortal existence—just to adjourn the whole question from the world we are in to the world which is beyond us—just to banish from human hearts the purpose or the wish to make a recovery from sin to righteousness here, and that because taught to believe a recovery may still be competent there—just to annihilate the character of our earthly state, as being a state of probation, and, by lulling men into a security that there is room for repentance and recovery on the other side of death, to turn the whole of their existence on this side of death into a jubilee of impiety and of irreligious defiance.

The Scripture gives us no warrant to believe that our all is not staked, and irrecoverably staked, on the faith and obedience of the present life. Be assured you will paralyze all the motives to practical Christianity, by giving any countenance to the opposite representation; and you will not only indulge in unlicensed speculation, by attempting to dilute and do away the obvious literalities of Scripture on this subject, but you will find it a speculation of most baleful influence on the practice and the general principles of all who are infected by it.

When Scripture roundly and explicitly affirms any doctrine,

the whole of my Christian philosophy would lead me simply and silently to acquiesce. After this, I think it wrong almost to defend the proposition, as if the authority of an accredited message from heaven needed any confirmation or support from our reasonings. Yet, let me briefly, and in but one or two sentences, advert to what I hold an important view connected with this matter. When men talk of the disproportion between the sins of an ephemeral life and the penalties of a never-ending eternity, it should be recollected that this is really not the light in which the matter ought to be regarded. There is a law of habit exemplified within the field of every man's observation, and which he does not quarrel with. In virtue of this law, by every act of obedience, a man becomes stronger in the purpose and character of obedience; and by every act of wickedness, the propensities of wickedness lord it all the more strongly and resistlessly over him. Now, just imagine the continuity of this process to be kept up between time and eternity, and that, if we carry with us unreclaimed impiety and disobedience across the limit which separates the two worlds, we shall carry with us into our future state the habits and the passions, and all the vitiated principles of rebellion against God; and the punishments which come on the back of these will not be punishments for the sins of the present life, but fresh punishments for the fresh sins to which the inveteracy of our diseased moral nature is ever hurrying us—an inveteracy only to be cured on this side of death, and so affording a most impressive argument for our strenuous and, withal, our immediate repentance.

BOOK VI.—CHAP. I.

FOUNDATION OF CHURCH GOVERNMENT.

THE PRAYER.

WE desire, O God, to acknowledge that preserving hand by which we are sustained from day to day, and from week to week, and the precious season is lengthened out to us of our discipline and our preparation for eternity. May we know what it is to live above the world while we live in the world; and, upheld by the faith of the gospel, and making diligent use of all its expedients for carrying forward the work of sanctification, may we be enabled to follow on in that right and consistent way through all the cares and all the difficulties of life. Do Thou especially guide and animate the labours of those who aspire to the ministry of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and may the fruit of their studies and their exercises here be a signal blessing through them to the Church of our Lord and Saviour.—Amen.

It is a great question how far this unity of faith ought to extend. It is evident, that the greater the number of the Church's articles, the more limited and exclusive it will be. And I know not a more interesting question of Christian policy, than in how far it is advisable to give up certain points, and that with the view of opening a wider door of admittance to the Church, and of breaking down certain barriers of separation, which would give way indeed of themselves on the reconciliation of certain differences not being made indispensable to Christians being members of the same communion, or their being admitted into the fellowship of the same denomination. You will perceive, indeed, from what I have already adverted to, that this is a distinct matter from the question of a religious establishment, which may give up certain of its articles, and yet remain an establishment still—which may give up certain of its peculiarities in regard to patronage and church government, and yet, with its provision for a national clergy, remain essentially an establishment, though a less exclusive, or a more

liberal, or, if you choose so to express it, a more lax and latitudinarian establishment than it was before.

It is evident, that the precise length to which a Christian denomination should go in defining its boundaries, the degree to which it should multiply its conditions, is a thing of arbitrary determination, depending on the reasons which might be brought to bear on it, and essentially connected with the limits which separate what is of major from what is of minor importance in matters ecclesiastical. For example, there were questions on which schisms broke out in former ages, that would give little concern to theologians of any description in the present day; and, on the other hand, there is no Church, however much it may have multiplied its articles of faith, or, which is quite synonymous to this, however close and narrow it may have drawn the limit around its own party, which does not nevertheless allow a latitude and a liberty in some things—things on which, though members of the same denomination, they can agree to differ; and it is precisely on the consideration, how many the things are on which we may still agree to differ, that, if determined more largely than at the settlement of the existing Churches in Christendom, would throw open the doors of the Establishment wider than they are at present to the general community.

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The controversies about Church Government have been exposed to much illogical treatment from the want of a right discrimination between the lawful and the obligatory. The distinction which I now make is different from that of Paul between the lawful and the expedient. I use another word than expedient at present; and I beg you will attend to the import of the difference between that which is lawful and that which is obligatory. Many things are lawful for me to do which I am under no obligation of doing; for, though lawful to do them, it may be equally lawful for me to refrain from doing them. The lawfulness of doing a particular thing does not necessarily imply the unlawfulness of not doing it; as, for example, it may be lawful to celebrate the Sacrament of the

Supper in a sitting posture, yet not unlawful to celebrate it in a kneeling posture ; whereas, if, instead of lawful, it were obligatory to celebrate it in a sitting posture, then it would be unlawful to celebrate it kneeling. In other words, though you prove the lawfulness of a given practice, you do not on that account prove the unlawfulness of a different or an opposite practice ; but, once make out that a practice is obligatory, then all other practices diverse from it, or opposite to it, are held in the face of the obligation, and therefore positively unlawful.

Now, even though the Independents should be able to allege, which I am very far from conceding to them, that their mode of church government had the warrant of scriptural example, this might establish no more than the lawfulness of that constitution, but not, most certainly, the exclusive obligation of it. There might be the warrant of a scriptural example, and so far this may be called scriptural authority for Independency ; but I would not hold such an authority as this as establishing the divine right of Independency. For when we speak of the divine right of any particular form of church government, I imagine that by this is meant, its being obligatory that we should adopt that form, and that only ; or, in other words, by the adoption of it we do right, and by the adoption of any other we do wrong.

I am not pronouncing at present on the merits of any particular ecclesiastical constitution ; but I want you, in the mean time, to estimate the difference, in point of argumentative effect, between a proof that a certain form is lawful, and therefore may be adopted, and a proof that a certain form is obligatory, and therefore must be adopted. If you make out the latter verdict in favour of any one form, this were a sentence of positive condemnation on all the others ; but if the former verdict be the whole length to which you can go in favour of any particular form, then the adoption of it may be right, and the adoption of the others be right also.

BOOK VI.—CHAP. II.

PROPHECIES AS TO THE CHURCH OF ROME, EPISCOPACY, AND
PRESBYTERY.

THE PRAYER.

WE again present ourselves before Thee, O God, with the language of acknowledgment; but do Thou rebuke all hypocrisy away from our professions, that we may not be of the number of those who draw near with their lips and honour Thee with their mouths, while their hearts are far from Thee. May we know what it is to worship God in spirit and in truth; and cause Thy light and Thy strength to descend upon us, that we may be fortified against all temptation, and enabled to walk in the way of Thy pure and perfect commandment. Be with us now and ever.—Amen.

Even though much more richly furnished with the details of prophetic interpretation than I am, there would be no room in a general theological course for entering at any length into them; and from this we should further feel ourselves precluded, did we limit ourselves, as we ought, to the certainties, or at least to the very high probabilities, that meet us on this most interesting walk of investigation. But let me at least recommend a large course of reading upon this subject; and I do promise you a very pleasing and powerful confirmation of the Christian argument as the result of it. Even those books which may be least spoken of, and have been well-nigh superseded by the lucubrations of later expounders, such as the works of Hurd and Bishop Newton, particularly the latter, will not only greatly interest you by their perusal, but add to the strength of your convictions. Newton gives a whole volume to the single book of the Apocalypse; and though unable to vouch for many of his specific interpretations, yet it is impossible, I think, to rise from the perusal without a strong and firm impression of the accordance between even this symbolic and highly figurative book and the literal history of the world

from the commencement of the Christian dispensation. I am far from saying that the prophecy casts a clear and confident light on the unfulfilled events; but we doubt not that the fulfilled events will at length cast a most clear and confident light upon the prophecy. But we must not deny, that much remains to be verified, that the reformation of three centuries back has not yet accomplished the great object of the overthrow of Antichrist. It may have shaken the antichrist of Popery or High Churchism, but the antichrist of infidelity remains unbroken, nay, I think, is growing in strength and audacity in the midst of us. The elements of change and of conflict are visibly at work. Christendom is far as ever from a condition of sure and prosperous tranquillity; nor do I think we shall arrive at it by a pacific process. There is, if not a military, at least a strenuous mental warfare, of which we already hear the far notes of preparation—a war, if not of arms, at least of opinions; but whatever days of suffering or of violence may be coming, we do believe of the indestructible Church of Christ, that it will only be cradled into firm and perpetual establishment by the storms which are raised for its overthrow.

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I must confess that the testimony of Epiphanius is highly accordant with my own views on the question of church government, which seems historically to have been changed and adapted according to the purposes of what may be termed Christian expediency; and instead of being decisively settled in Scripture, left very much to the discretion of Christian men. In as far as we are at liberty to judge from his account of the matter, there seems to have been no regular Episcopacy at first, and that men, instead of starting with it from the days of the Apostles, at length found their way to its more full and formal establishment through centuries afterwards. I at the same time agree with the author of the text-book, in conceding to the defenders of this order in church government, that they derive a plausible support to themselves from this very testimony, seeing they might allege that the limited extension of Christi-

anity precluded, and for a considerable time, the complete and regular establishment of the Episcopalian order; but that it says much for the lawfulness, if not the positive and scriptural obligation of such an order, that whenever the requisite enlargement of the faith admitted of it, we behold the full complement of bishops and parochial clergy under them.

I am willing to admit this in proof of the lawfulness, but not in proof of the divine right or the exclusive obligation of Episcopacy. The analogy utterly fails, in my apprehension, between our binding observation of it, and our binding observation of the Christian Sabbath; for the Christian Sabbath has to allege the universal observance of it from the very commencement of the Apostolic age, and not from the third or fourth century after it. And, what is greatly more decisive, the law of the Sabbath is an unrepealed law of the Jewish decalogue, enshrined there among the immutabilities of truth and justice and essential piety, and therefore requiring a formal or express repeal for doing it away. The Jewish priesthood, again, bearing resemblance to Episcopacy in respect to the gradation of ecclesiastical rank, has no sanction whatever from within the law of the ten commandments, but was expressly superseded by the priesthood of Christ, was set aside along with all other temple observances of the Jewish ritual, and left the Christian economy of a church government to be modelled on the general principle of what made most for the extension of the gospel, and most for the good of the people's edification.

You will not fail to perceive from what a dimly conjectural region it is that the authorities on all sides of the question respecting church government are gathered; insomuch that I cannot enter with any very keen or decided earnestness into the controversy at all. It is extremely difficult to work up one's mind into anything like a state of adequate sympathy with the vehemence which is felt and uttered upon these subjects; and really without the light or the apparent importance of any great principle being concerned in the argument, it requires an artificial sort of formation not at everybody's command, to go all the lengths which many do upon these

matters. It has been exceedingly well said by the judicious Andrew Fuller, of the Baptist denomination, on whose last visit to Scotland in 1813, I felt my humble country manse greatly honoured by harbouring him for a day and two nights within its walls—it has been exceedingly well said by this able champion and expounder of our common Christianity, that the points on which the disciples of the Saviour agree greatly outnumber, and in respect of importance very greatly outweigh, the points on which they differ—that for many ages the attention and the zeal of Christians have been vastly too much expended on the points on which they differ; but that now, it is to be hoped, the sentiments which they hold in common will be far more the objects of their steadfast and harmonious regard. Proceeding on this principle, I can as yet, with the utmost stretch of charity, or, as some would term it, of latitudinarianism, hold no fellowship with Unitarians in respect of doctrine, nor with Catholics in respect of government—the errors of the latter on the subject of government, in as far as they dethrone the Scripture from its supremacy over the faith and consciences of men, being, in fact, the indefinite source of all sorts of error in regard to the doctrine. But apart from these, and perhaps from one or two more who can be named, I think we might recognise in almost every denomination a personal Christianity, which is not even brought to hazard by the peculiarity either of their articles or their forms; and without disputing the superior expediency of one kind of government to another, I do think that, considering the manifold ties of common sentiment and principle between us and the evangelical sectaries of Christendom, it were better that we drew more closely together, and that the movement, at all events, instead of being one of wider distance and separation, were in the way of kinder and more intimate converse than we have hitherto held.

BOOK VI.—CHAP. III.

NATURE AND EXTENT OF POWER IMPLIED IN CHURCH GOVERNMENT.

THE PRAYER.

O GOD, Thou art the Ancient of days, Thy years are from everlasting, and of Thine endurance there is no end. Thou comprehendest all time, and fillest all space with Thy presence and with Thy power. It is only by the notices which Thou hast given in Thy works and which Thou hast given in Thy word, that we can climb our ascending way to the abode of the Eternal. And we desire, instead of meddling with matters too high for us, that we should be satisfied humbly to learn and faithfully to apply. Deliver us from the power of all lofty and delusive imaginations, and enable us to bring every thought of our hearts into captivity to the obedience of Christ. And seeing that the time is short, and that our few little years will soon be summed up, may we give ourselves henceforth, with all devotedness of heart and of purpose, to the studies and the preparations of immortality.

I think Dr. Hill on the whole understates the independence of the Church. The State can at any time withdraw from the Church its temporalities ; but the Church is perfect mistress of the terms on which she will consent to receive them. In Scotland the Church permits no interference whatever by the civil power in things properly ecclesiastical.* Her doctrine, her discipline, her modes of worship, are all her own ; and in regard to that fancied subjection of the ecclesiastical to the civil which is involved in the question of patronage, let it be remembered, in the first place, that the holders of this power are limited in their choice to the persons whom we, in the act of licensing, have judged worthy of preaching the gospel ; and what is more decisive still, ere the presentation can take effect, the Church must lend her concurrence, and may, by the votes of her ministers, either reject the deed or sustain it. There is, in the first instance, the convenience of a simple executive in the nominations ; and, secondly, a guard against the possibilities of a cor-

* This was written during the Session 1831-2.

rupt nomination either in the authority given to the popular call, or in the independent judgment of our courts sitting in deliberation on the question, whether the specific appointment of this man to this parish is or is not for the good of Christianity? This is the real working of the machinery of our ecclesiastical system in Scotland; and however much we may have departed in practice from what an increasing number both of the clergy and of the people hold to be a more excellent way, that way still lies open to us, and there is a patent and a practicable avenue by the constitution of our Church to every desirable reformation. As I have repeatedly said in your hearing, the connexion between Church and State may be altogether as pure as it is prolific of a thousand blessings to society, and those blessings of the highest order, opening, as it does, a door for the ministrations of the gospel to millions of people who, under any other system, would be suffered to remain on the outfields of paganism, and yet leaving the Church to the exercises of her own independent judgment and conscience in regard to all the lessons and all the ordinances of Christianity.

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I rather feel as if the author in this place (p. 479) had omitted the great object and meaning of the Apostle when he affirmed that the power which he exercised was given to him for edification and not for destruction. It is quite true that there is nothing in the exercise of church government which should destroy or overbear any of the objects specified in the textbook, such as liberty of thought and the right of private judgment; "not that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy." But the thing specially pointed to and provided for, I imagine, in the power not being given for destruction but for edification, is its not being competent to exercise it so as that any person who happens to be the object of it shall be treated or held as an irrecoverable outcast while there is any hope of his being reclaimed, and more particularly, that there shall be a mixture of tenderness along with the severity which is exercised towards him. This harmonizes beautifully with the direction given to the Church of Corinth

as to the manner in which they should proceed with one of their delinquents, to treat him with kindness, lest he should be swallowed up of overmuch sorrow. The discipline exercised in the Christian Church was, as the Apostle terms it, for the destruction of the flesh—not for the destruction of the spirit, but that the spirit might be saved. This object is never lost sight of; but this object would have been both lost sight of and lost, had the Church assumed a position of resolved and impracticable hostility towards any who had been connected with her. She was not thus to close the avenue of return and repentance against any who are strayed children. She was not to let down any expedient for winning them back again; and this she would have done had there been no mixture of goodness with severity. Ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself lest thou also be tempted.

It would serve greatly to clear and to enlighten us in the matter both of church ordinances and of church government, if we as much as possible kept by the distinctive spirit and principles of the gospel in our mode of conducting them. I have already endeavoured to apply this principle in the matter of admission to the sacraments, making the access to them, on the one hand, as free to all as the great and saving benefits of Christianity are free to all, and making, on the other hand, the guard in the way of our approach as strict to all as the guard which our Saviour Himself set up in the way of those who proposed to enter on the profession of His discipleship; on the one hand, saying, "Come to me all;" but, on the other hand, saying, "He who cometh unto me must forsake all." In like manner, on the subject of discipline there is or ought to be no excommunication which may be termed final—no absolute sentence of banishment for life from the Church—no utter destruction of all hopes of reinstatement—no such treatment of offenders as might sink their spirits into the helplessness of utter despair. The Church should hold out no greater aspect of severity towards such than the gospel itself does; and we know what its constitution is in this respect. While there is life, there is hope. If he repent, forgive him. "Come now, let

us reason together, though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be made as white as the snow ; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.”—“ I will heal their backslidings ; I will receive them graciously ; I will love them freely.” There is no sin beyond the reach of our Saviour’s atonement, and none therefore should be beyond the hope of recovery ; there should be no impracticable barrier in the way of restoration within the limits of the visible Church upon earth. Such extreme cases may very seldom occur in the simple annals of a parish ; but in all cases let there be along with severity a mixture and a mitigation of Christian tenderness. Let us never give up the peculiar weapon of Christianity, which is love, that moral engine which is found to be so omnipotent of operation over the hearts of men, which even in the actings and reactions of human beings in society, has been found of such mighty and resistless effect with the worst of criminals, and which, looking down from heaven to earth even on the guiltiest of us all, is found to have in it the efficacy of that specific charm by which at once to reconcile and to regenerate the species.

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There is a very important principle which I should like merely to present to your notice, and which, I am sure, if acted on to the extent it ought to be, would conduce mightily to the peace of the Church, and without endangering its purity. Considered as the subjects of civil government, there is a duty of obedience incumbent upon us, from which we are not absolved by the errors, and even to a considerable extent by the tyranny of our rulers. The tranquillity and order of the body politic would be in perpetual hazard, and would be placed in truly a most precarious condition, if, on the moment that rulers departed from their duty by ever so little, subjects were absolved from theirs, and all was to go into anarchy and derangement on the event of one of the two parties having deviated, however so little, from the strict line of moderation and propriety which they ought to have held. It is far better that the duties of the two parties should, if I may so express it, considerably overlap each other. I mean that it should require a great

degree of injustice and tyranny on the part of the governor to justify such a resistance of violence and rebellion on the part of the governed as might lead to the dissolution of society. Now, be assured, though you may not perhaps have attended either to the analogy or to its great practical importance, that the same principle is in a certain, and that a very considerable degree, applicable to the matters of ecclesiastical government. It is clear from the example of our Saviour, that notwithstanding the many flagrant delinquencies of those who sate in Moses' seat, yet He felt the tie of those obligations which bound Him to the established institutions of the country, and has bequeathed to us a model of the regard and deference which He Himself did yield to them. I am far from saying that there is not a certain degree of tyranny in a State which would justify rebellion, and that there is not a certain degree of corruption in a Church which would justify schism ; but beneath that degree there may be injustice in the administration of the one, and also beneath that degree there may be corruption in the administration of the other, under which both rebellion and schism would be unlawful. There would be no stability in a civil commonwealth if, on every provocation by its rulers, the members thereof might justifiably resort to arms ; and there would just be as little in the Church, or Christian commonwealth, if, on every provocation, however slight, the members thereof were at liberty, or it were lawful for them to fly off at a tangent. There is in both cases a certain duty of subordination, which, without necessarily leading either to a hurtful acquiescence in tyranny in the one case, or to a hurtful acquiescence in corruption in the other, is most conducive to prosperity and peace, whether in things politic or in things ecclesiastical ; and I would therefore have you to remark the sound and well-conditioned temperament of those who will stand their ground as members of a Christian society, and maintain their adherence to it, notwithstanding many of those appearances which would make schismatics and separatists of other men, of those who will not on light grounds add to those public divisions which have been the occasion of scandal to our common Christianity,

and who, while alive in feeling, and deep and decided in principle about all that was essential, would bear a thousand mortifications in smaller matters rather than force a disruption in the peace and order of the Church.

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I am quite sensible of the rapidity, and therefore the slightness of my examination on this last department of the Course. I have done little more than specify topics for your own more full and deliberate examination ; but I regard it the less in a question of church government than I would have done had I passed hastily or superficially over a subject which belonged to the essence of doctrinal theology. I am thankful that a three years' rotation of this advanced class is now accomplished, and that in describing it anew, I shall at least be relieved from the labour of a first preparation. I feel quite sensible, however, that much remains to be reillustrated and remodelled, and that justice to the different themes which successively meet us on our way, would require a perpetual, a continued exercise of fresh and original attention, even to the end of life.*

* These Notes were originally prepared during the Sessions 1829-30, 30-31, 31-32.



FOUR ADDRESSES

DELIVERED AS

PRINCIPAL OF THE NEW COLLEGE, EDINBURGH,

AT THE

OPENING OF THE CLASSES

IN NOVEMBER 1843, 1844, 1845, 1846.



PRINCIPAL'S ADDRESS

AT THE

OPENING OF THE FREE CHURCH COLLEGE,

NOVEMBER, 1843.

THE PRAYER.

THOU art, O God, from everlasting to everlasting. We cannot unravel the mystery of Thy being, and are even admitted to observe but a small part of Thy ways. Yet we desire to bless Thee that Thou hast impressed on that part so legible a transcript of Thy wisdom as to leave us without excuse if we seek not after God. Our souls would follow hard after Thee, and may we know what it is to lay a confident hold upon Thee as our Friend and our reconciled Father. For this purpose may we learn of Thee and of Thy will from Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent into the world, and give us that knowledge of Thyself and of Him which is life everlasting.

Our College, in respect of its actual professorships, may be said as yet to be exclusively theological, though with the prospect of being so extended as at length to embrace other professorships for certain of those sciences which are capable of a closer application, and admit of a more distinct bearing on theology, than is at all set forth in the course of our existing universities. It is the aim, and will be the study of the Church's Education Committee, so to regulate the preliminary as well as the strictly professional classes, to be attended by those of our students who

are preparing for the ministry of the gospel, that all shall be made more directly subservient than heretofore to the object of qualifying for the duties of this high and sacred vocation. A few general remarks will sufficiently evince the view that we ourselves entertain of those changes which ought to be made on our academic system, in order that the literature and philosophy of the antecedent schools might best pave the way for those lessons of heavenly and divine knowledge which are usually given forth by the masters of the Theological Faculty.

We shall be all the more readily understood if we can draw your attention to the very obvious distinction that obtains between the powers of the mind and the acquisitions of the mind. The faculty of acquiring knowledge is a wholly distinct matter from the knowledge itself; and if any method of discipline could be devised by which best to improve and invigorate the faculty, this might form the best preparation for speeding onward and multiplying our acquisitions not in one department only, but in many, perhaps in all the departments of universal truth. It is thus that by one and the same preliminary training, we might form—not the best naturalists, not the best jurists, not the best economists, not the best theologians; but we can imagine, that in virtue of this training, and before he who is the subject of it has turned himself to one or other of these sciences, or made a single acquisition in any of them, he has now been put into the best possible estate of armour and equipment for traversing and obtaining the mastery over them all, whichever of these departments in the territory of human knowledge he might choose to enter. There might be conceived an education common to all the learned professions, and anterior to them all, the object of which should be to strengthen the general powers of thought, and thus to prepare for a good commencement, merely by putting the instrument of acquisition into right order, even before a single acquisition has been made in any one of the branches of professional learning. It is thus that in the earlier stages of a university education the main object might be the exercise and invigoration of the mental powers, while, in the subsequent stages, after that the general body of

learners have broken up into separate portions, each having fixed on their own profession and entered on their own special walk, the object should be to accumulate the lessons of its particular science; or, in other words, to multiply and lay up in store the mental acquisitions which are to be gathered from that distinct province in the field of human knowledge.

But we shall perhaps make ourselves more intelligible, if, coming down from these generalities, we instance the actual precursory classes which are usually attended, prior to, and with the object of being preparatory for, those which are strictly theological.

Do not then let it obscure the distinction that we have already announced between the powers of the mind and the acquisitions of the mind, that the improvement of the former and increase of the latter, are generally combined into a two-fold benefit, as the fruit of one and the same study. For example, in the study of those languages which are usually taught at college, one might realize both these advantages. The scholarship which one is made to undergo in the prosecution of them, might be viewed either as a series of exercises or as a series of lessons. If viewed as exercises, they serve to discipline the mind, and so to strengthen its powers; if viewed as lessons, they serve to inform the mind, and so add to its acquisitions—the acquisition here being the knowledge of what the equivalent words and phrases in Greek or Latin are to the words and phrases of our own vernacular tongue; or when it is that the former either fall short of or exceed the latter in the force or felicity wherein some given sentiment or given meaning is embodied. If, for the sake of the discipline, we were asked to state a preference between these two languages, we should confess a difficulty in fixing on the one rather than on the other; but if, for the sake of the acquisition, we should instantly fasten upon the Greek—inasmuch as an immediate access to the original books of inspiration is of transcendently higher value than immediate access to all the Latin theology, whether of Christian Fathers or Continental Divines. But we are not prepared to recommend any curtailment in this depart-

ment of the preliminary education—though, if compelled to retrench anywhere, we could part with the Latin more easily than the Greek; or, to make even a further reduction, we should give up the classical for the sake of your more familiar and profound acquaintance with the Hellenistic Greek, both of the Septuagint Version and of the New Testament. But these are ulterior changes, which I hope will never be forced upon us from any other cause than from such an enlargement in some other quarter of your theological studies as to present us with a choice of the more for the less valuable, and that, too, in such abundance as that the former cannot be overtaken but by an abandonment of the latter. Meanwhile, let it be understood, that though there be ample room for your preparatory studies in the Greek being turned into a more professional direction than at present, there will be no relaxation, but rather an increase, in our demand for your proficiency in that language which has been signalized as the great vehicle of the Christian revelation.

It will better illustrate the meaning of our distinction between powers and acquisitions, when I speak of the mathematics as a preliminary to your theological studies; for it is chiefly, if not entirely, as a discipline that I value the antecedency of this science to your entrance on the business of the Hall, and scarcely, if at all, as an informer, or for the sake of those truths wherewith it possesses the mind. I am not aware that, as an expounder to the people of the lessons of the gospel, I am much the better for knowing that the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles; or that the square of the hypotenuse is equal to the squares of the two containing sides in a right-angled triangle. But I have a strong persuasion, that both the power to apprehend and the power to convince may be mightily strengthened—that the habit of clear and consecutive reasoning may be firmly established by the successive journeys which the mind is called on to perform along the pathway of geometrical demonstration. The truth is, that, as a preparative, whether for the bar or for the pulpit, I have more value in mathematics for the exercise which the

mind takes as it travels along the road, than for all the spoil which it gathers at the landing-place. Here, then, we have the distinct example of an education that we desiderate for our students of theology, not for the sake to them of its lessons, but for the sake of its exercises; and though, in the universities of Scotland, it has not been the habit to exact as indispensable an attendance on the mathematical classes, we hold it of prime importance that the students of the Free Church should undergo, at least for one session, the discipline of its various lessons, and that in all the rigour and purity of the highest academic model.

Our demand, too, for a preliminary attendance on a class of logic, is more on account of its processes than on account of its results: we deem it, too, greatly more valuable for its exercises than for its lessons. The specific acquirement of this class is to have learned by it the rules and the methods of right reasoning. Yet, to have studied for one year the lessons of geometry we hold a better preparation for becoming practically and in effect a good reasoner, than to have been made acquainted with all the prescriptions of logic; but, like geometry, it is itself a discipline, and it is more for this than for its instruction that we prize it. It is not in the material products of the labour, but the labour itself, that the use of a gymnasium lies, in giving both strength and expertness to the corporal faculties; and thus it might not be the substantive lessons of a school, but the regimen of a school, that constitutes its best and highest recommendation. In this way a class of logic, like that of the late Professor Jardine in Glasgow, might prove an admirable gymnasium for nurturing into greater expertness and power the mental faculties: and when, beside the method of reasoning, there is cognizance taken there of the reasoning faculty, and so the mind is led to a reflex view of its own processes, this forms the commencement of a habit of the most signal benefit throughout the posterior education of a scientific theologian, and a habit, too, that practically will avail him to the last, after that, having entered on his professional career, he comes to deal in the lessons of

subjective Christianity, and may then speak most convincingly even to the hearers of a simple congregation, just because, versant in the mysteries of his own spirit, he speaks most clearly, and so with greatest effect, to the consciences of men.

We have thus done little more than announce ; for, within the limits of a single address, there is not the time to argue or expatiate on the views now given in favour of the three first preliminary classes—that is, of Greek, and Mathematics, and Logic—not so much as forming a course of instruction, but rather a course of gymnastics for the mind, and by which it is prepared to enter on the business of the two remaining preliminary classes, where the chief aim is to obtain, not the power of acquiring knowledge, but the positive acquisitions of knowledge—to learn what are the phenomena and laws of the material, and what the phenomena and laws of the moral world ; or, in other words, to store the mind with those substantive truths, those substantive informations, which, one after another, come within the reach, and are appropriated by the scholar, in the act of traversing the physical and the mental and the ethical sciences. It is here that we feel most induced to innovate on the existing methods of academical education, and it is now, therefore, that we would prefer the most earnest demand on the attention of those who hear us.

First, then, we prefer the antecedency given by Aristotle to the physical over the mental sciences ; and we should alternate the present order, making the natural philosophy come first, and afterwards the mental or moral philosophy, just as the physics come before the metaphysics in the ancient courses of education.

But, besides this, and more important than this, instead of attempting to lay before our theological students such a systematic view of any of the physical sciences as is now given at our existing universities, I would select from each of them those truths or topics which can be made to have a special bearing on the subject-matter of our profession, and form out of these a course of rich and varied materials, replete, it might be, with interest, and affording scope for such new and import-

ant views as are ever casting up when one traverses any of the territories of human thought by a new line, or looks to any given object of contemplation from a new point, and in a different relation. Let me instance Paley's *Natural Theology*. For the construction of that masterly treatise, he did not, that I am aware, study in the usual systematic way of it the science of anatomy, though his argument is mainly based on the informations of that science—that is, on such of its informations as were of avail for his special purpose of setting forth the hand of a Designer in the manifold and exquisite adaptations of the human framework. Such are the high merits of this composition, that we would not object to make Paley's *Natural Theology* one of our text-books. But would you, because it happens chiefly to be an anatomical demonstration of the being of a God—would you, on that account, make it imperative on our students to attend a course of anatomy? The truth is, so universally has the Creator imprinted the traces and footsteps of Himself on the whole of His varied workmanship, that each department of nature, and so each science having that department for its object, has a natural theology of its own. Botany, for example, could furnish one or two beautiful chapters; yet who, on this account, would ever think of demanding from our students the testimonials of their attendance upon its academic lessons? Natural history, in its various branches, is far richer in evidence for a God than natural philosophy; yet we do not, on that account, make it a thing of imperative obligation that any of its classes should be attended by our students. I am not for proscribing natural philosophy; but I am for selecting and giving greater prominency to those of its doctrines which serve best to fortify or to illustrate the argument for a God. I would do this much justice to natural philosophy, but I would do the same justice to each of the physical sciences. I would select from each the best contribution which it offered to the cause of Theism; and, instead of attendance on any one of its classes taught in their present general and absolute form, and without any special relation to our all-important theme, I

would have—not a class of natural philosophy—not a class of natural history—not a class of botany, or anatomy, or chemistry; but I would substitute for all these, as one of the preliminary and indispensable stages of our curriculum, a Professorship of the Physical Sciences in their connexion with Theology, the object of which should be to point out the signatures, and set forth the glories of Him who sits enthroned on the riches of the universe.

But, to come rightly in possession of your materials for such a high argument, should not you arrive at them in a strictly scientific manner; or are you entitled to make use of them without having made a study of the respective sciences from which they have been taken, and that fully and philosophically? Just as much entitled as the thousands of our general population are to avail themselves of the information of the almanac, when they proceed on the certainty of a coming eclipse, though not one of them can so calculate the period as to predict the conjunctions and oppositions of any of the celestial bodies. Let us go back to natural philosophy, and instance one of the most illustrious of its doctrines, that the actual law of gravitation is the only one which can ensure the stability of our planetary system, it being demonstrable that, by the deviation of but a thousandth part, all would speedily go into disorder, and the present goodly mechanism of the heavens be broken up in the course of a few ages. Such is the demonstrable truth; but is it necessary, ere we turn it to its theological uses, that he, the professor, or you, the students of theology, must have mastered the demonstration? Then, instead of one session at the natural philosophy, you must labour for years to surmount the arduous mathematics of La Place and La Grange, and find your way to their results through the very pathway which was so laboriously trodden by these great masters, instead of being satisfied with the collective testimony of the scientific world. I venture to say that, at this rate, no one science which is at all cognate with or related to any other, could possibly get on. The labourers in the respective departments must give and take from each

other—all undergoing the labour of their own processes, but making over their results to be used as a common property for the general good of mankind. In borrowing from other sciences, it is with their results, and not with their processes, that the student or cultivator of any one science has to do ; and he rests his confidence in the truth of that result as a most legitimate and warrantable ground of evidence, when he rests it on the truthfulness of the general voice emitted by astronomers at large, or by naturalists at large, when they depone to what the articles are of their universal faith ; and thus it is that we theologians may lay our immediate hand on that beautiful law in the celestial physics which has just been announced to you, and turn it to a theological purpose, without being compelled to find our way to it by the calculus of a high mathematics, just as Paley took instanter the materials that were furnished to him by professional men wherewith to frame his lucid and masterly demonstration, without himself taking up the knife of the anatomist, and thereby finding his way to them. At the point of junction between theology and the other sciences, it is quite competent for theology to lay hold of the results which the others make over to her, and for the soundness of which they alone are responsible—herself, at the same time, being responsible for the use which she makes of them, that is, for her own processes, when she carries forward the information that she has thus gotten to ulterior conclusions of her own.

Will it be said that by this change we would superficialize the education of our students? Our object is directly the reverse. It is to make their preparatory bear more abundantly than now on their professional learning, and this with the view not of making them more superficial, but of making them more profound and accomplished theologians. The days were when all the lessons of natural philosophy could be overtaken, and yet leave enough of unexpended strength and time for the loftiest and most arduous achievements in sacred literature. But in the march of discovery, these lessons have now accumulated a hundredfold, and it would require the best years of a man's

life to attain the mastery over them ; so that the question is imperatively laid upon us, Shall we still grapple with this whole subject in a general and absolute class, with the sure result of a stunted and meagre theology, or shall we make a selection of its lessons, to be taught in a class which shall be relative and rudimental to theology, so as both to strengthen the basis and elevate the superstructure of that science, which we shall labour to minister in all its perfection, both for the purposes of defence and of distinction to the students of the Free Church of Scotland ? Let us not stand in dread of superficiality, because we take no more from the physical sciences than what of the strictly proper and professional those sciences have to give. We do not need to go forth upon their domain in quest of the profound or elaborate—we shall have enough of this within our own borders. After we have received all that we want at their hands, we shall call for the severest draughts on the attention of our scholars, if we but adequately expound the distinction between final and efficient causes, or the important distinction, not till recently adverted to, between the laws of matter and the dispositions of matter ; and still more, if we can succeed in clearing away from the theistical argument the cumbrous dialectics of a former generation ; and lastly, if we can dispose of such infidel plausibilities as have been conjured up by Hume and La Place—the one profound in metaphysics and the other in astronomy, yet both of them superficial in theology notwithstanding—as if the very labour and time they had expended in their own favourite walks had just unfitted them all the more for the patient and profound treatment of theological questions. We are aware of the association that exists between the popular and the superficial, and of a very prevalent impression that the Free Church of Scotland is, in respect to the learning of her ministers, on the highway of being degraded and vulgarized. We leave this degenerating process to others. Let it be ours to make head against it ; and should the men who combine the rigidly scientific with the purely ecclesiastical, such men as the Brewsters and Flemings of the present day, ever fall into our hands, let it be our care that they and such

as they shall preside over the lectureship which we now recommend ; and by so guarding the access to our theological seminary, let it go forth and be palpable to all men, that in the Free Church of Scotland the union between the conjunct interests of science and of sacredness is held to be inviolable, and that with us a sound faith and sound philosophy are at one.

I must now be very brief and general in the exposition of my views on the last of the preliminary classes, which I would have to be a class of mental and moral philosophy, but modified, too, as the former, from the absolute and the general into the relative form—that is, a professorship of the mental and moral sciences in their connexion with theology. Between the two classes natural theology might be fully overtaken—a mighty disencumbrance to the junior professor of divinity, because leaving him free to enter at once on the evidences of Christianity. And when, between them, the light of nature has been held up to the question of a God, then, in the hands of the ethical professor, the law of nature may be extended from the social duties to the duties which man owes to his Maker ; and so prove, what the moral philosophy of our day has signally failed in, a schoolmaster for bringing men to Christ. And then as to the mental, in contradistinction to moral science—as to what Dr. Thomas Brown calls the physiology of the mind—the reduction of the absolute to a relative class will not necessarily call for such abridgments as those we have proposed on the natural philosophy. For, in truth, so manifold are the adaptations between the subjective mind and the objective Christianity which is addressed to it, that we know not a better preparation than the study of the mental processes or laws, both for your philosophically appreciating the internal evidences of our faith, and for your exploring, with the eye of a scientific observer, the depths and the recesses of experimental religion. As far as the rationale of that high and hidden process, even our sanctification by faith, can be laid open, let all progress be made in it, when it will appear, that the direct experience of the advanced Christian, whether as verified in his own person, or as adverted to in Scripture, is in striking

coincidence with the discoveries of those who make the working of the human faculties the object of their reflex contemplation. I cannot at present particularize—I shall do it afterwards, and within a few days, in one of my introductory lectures to the theological class. But meanwhile, recurring to the charge of ours being a slender and superficial education—because we would translate the absolute into the relative and rudimental—let me instance the single case of President Edwards. I know not if he was a man of large acquisitions on the field of metaphysics, and imagine that both Leibnitz and Hume were before him in their extended survey of the mind, with its various faculties and operations. Each of the two, we conceive, would have been better prepared for conducting a general or absolute class on the mental philosophy; while Edwards would have been incomparably better than either for the superintendence of a relative class on mental science in connexion with theology. And is there any who would apprehend a meagre superficiality either in the professor or students as the effect of such a scholarship—more limited, we admit, than the other in point of extent—but all the more intense and profound, as if from the greater concentration of the intellect on the fewer topics which engaged it. And accordingly, when the orthodox system was assailed at one of its most important positions, this called forth the great American divine, who acquitted himself the noblest of its champions, though he had no value for science, and scarcely ever studied it but in its subservience to theology, and for his more thorough equipment for the battles of the faith. And it is thus, that when relieved from the servitude of such classes as have hitherto preceded the study of divinity, but do not in the least prepare for it, and when such other classes as we have ventured to suggest are substituted in their room, that we may look for a succession of labourers on the field of authorship, who, girded for the work and the warfare, will at once deepen the foundation, and elevate the superstructure, and strengthen the bulwarks of our science.

Edwards is far the highest name which the New World has

to boast of; and if aught can enhance our reverence for the achievement by which he distanced so immeasurably all the speculations of all the schools in Europe, it must be that his was an achievement consecrated by the deepest spirit of religion, and performed by a man who, almost unconscious of science, or at least unconscious of all its honours, was prompted to the task which he has fulfilled so admirably, by his devotedness to that cause which, as a Christian minister, he felt to be the dearest and the best. There is indeed a striking contrast between the unlettered people among whom he laboured as a pastor, and the philosophers whom, as an author, he held converse with, and something most touchingly beautiful in the adaptation that he made of himself to both, giving rise to a corresponding contrast between the plain ministrations of his Sabbath, and the profound musings and inspirations of his solitude. His book on the Freedom of the Will, with a homeliness of style that represents the worth and the simplicity of his private life, by the firm staple of its thoughts, and the whole texture of its wondrous argument, is an undying testimonial to the superior and unrivalled strength of his metaphysical talents. Never was there a happier combination of great power with great piety; and were it not for the higher examples in the surpassing volume wherewith heaven has directly furnished us, I would hold it as the brightest eulogy, both on the character and the genius of any clergyman, that he copied the virtues and had imbibed the theology of Edwards.

PRINCIPAL'S ADDRESS.

NOVEMBER, 1844.

THE PRAYER.

O GOD, Thou hast said that all Scripture is profitable. Do Thou open our understandings to understand it. Thou hast exalted Thy word over all Thy name. To it may we give earnest heed, till the day dawn and the day-star arise in our hearts. Teach us to sit with the docility of children to the lessons of the Bible; and along with the visitation which impresses upon us the spirit, do Thou also bless the learning which opens to us the letter of the divine testimony.

On the one hand we read of the simplicity that is in Christ—of the danger lest we should be corrupted from it by a vain philosophy—of the science falsely so called—of the mysteries in our holy faith being revealed unto babes, and hidden from the wise and prudent—of an illumination by the Spirit of God transcendently above and beyond all the possible illuminations of human learning—of a discernment which nature cannot reach, and which only cometh by the visitation of a light from on high, when the day dawns and the day-star arises in the heart—of the gospel being preached to the poor, and that, too, not in the words which man teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, so that they become rich in faith and heirs of the everlasting kingdom, while the rich and the accomplished in this world's knowledge remain in outer darkness;—on the one hand we read of these things in the Bible, and yet, on the other hand, we are told of the importance of a learned ministry; and to provide this, have schools and colleges been instituted throughout all Christendom; and if not the whole encyclopædia of human learning, at least a great part of it,

must be traversed, ere access can be had to its pulpits. And so in many minds there is the feeling of a certain discrepancy between the sayings of God's word and the doings of most of our modern Churches. It is thus that some explanation is called for to harmonize the different, if not the opposite representations, that we may understand the respective places or functions which belong, on the one hand, to the education given at universities, and, on the other, to that teaching of God's Spirit whereby the most unlettered of men might be made wise unto salvation.

It is the misfortune of a single address when it cannot fully overtake the topic which itself sets out with—the precise difficulty in which we are now landed, under the pressure of which we shall dismiss the formal preliminaries of argument, and enter at once upon such examples as might serve to convey our meaning in a way the most brief, and as far as possible the most comprehensive.

The most apposite illustration, then, which we can think of, is furnished by the question—a vital and fundamental one in theology—that relates to the component parts of Scripture, and on which there hinges the all-important decision of what the books are and what the books are not which are entitled to have their place and their standing in an infallible directory of human faith. On the solution of this question it depends what the compositions are which we should receive as inspired, and what the compositions which we should reject as apocryphal—a question this on which the Catholic and Protestant Churches have determined variously. Now, each separate book at issue, or that is at all involved in this controversy, has a separate history of its own, which can be traced upward from age to age through a series of testimonies till we reach the period of Christian fathers and apostolic men, and come to the days of the New Testament—nay, can ascend to still older depositions than those of Christ and His immediate followers, as high as to the very confines, or rather within the limits of the Pentateuch. It is thus that the books of Scripture have come down to us with a force of historical evidence which abundantly

sustains their title to a place in the sacred canon ; and it is the want of this evidence which has determined the Churches of the Reformation to exclude the Apocrypha. But it is an evidence this which they could only come in sight of by means of erudition, or through the medium of the lore and the languages of antiquity. In this way of it you will perceive, that the signatures of divine authority for each book are gathered from the contemporaneous, or along the pathway of the successive authorship—that is, from places external to the book. But this does not hinder there being another way of it. There is not the least incongruity, nay, it is in perfect keeping, and what might be expected, that the same book which has the external, should have internal signatures of its divinity also ; so that while it is only for the scholar to explore and ascertain the one evidence as it lies among the documents and the traditions of former ages, it is for the saint, with his eye intent on the word, and his soul enlightened by the Spirit of God, to discern the other evidence as it beams, in the light of its own effulgence, on the vision of his now clarified intellect from the pages of inspiration. The question has been much and earnestly agitated, on which of these two evidences it is that the canon of Scripture has been settled ?—a most interesting question, truly, and requiring for its solution the employment of certain most important and great ecclesiastical principles, as the authority of a Church, and the right of private judgment, and the use of human learning in Christianity, and the deference due to the sense or the discernment of such men as are to be found in the humblest classes of society, and whom the Apostle had in his eye when he said, That he who is spiritual judgeth all things, and is himself judged of no man. Many of our most eminent writers on the side of the Reformation maintain, that it is the internal evidence, or the truth shining in the word, which fixes the canon ; though for myself I agree with Richard Baxter, that under the guidance of this evidence alone we could never have found our way through the mass of human authorship to the discovery and selection of those sixty-six different books which make up the code or collection of the Old and New Testament ;

but that in the first instance it was the learning of the Church which rightly determined the canonicity of Scripture, and that mainly on the strength of external evidence; and that then, in the second instance, where the liberality of the Church, now become Protestant, opened up a free access to Scripture for all the population, and enjoined, even from early boyhood, their heedful and daily perusal of it, that then the internal evidence came into play, and nobly re-echoed the same lesson with the external by its miracles of conversion and of saving knowledge among the congregations and families of the land. But it is not essential to our object that this controversy should be settled, or that we should announce the side which we take upon it. Enough for us if it be granted that both these evidences may exist, the external and the internal; and where, we ask, is the discrepancy between them?—the one, it may be, as indispensable in the providence of God for keeping alive in our world the knowledge of the Bible's claims, and this across the dreary millennium of the dark ages, as the durability of the ink and the parchment was indispensable for keeping alive the knowledge of the Bible's contents, and transmitting them downwards uninjured and entire along the line of many generations. In virtue of the one the learned of high scholarship could single out the books of Scripture from among the other relics of antiquity, and concentrate upon them the attention of all the Churches; in virtue of the other, the unlearned of humbler scholarship could, in reading these Scriptures, when brought home to their hearts by God's own Spirit, be made to taste of their power and preciousness. The way to harmonize these two elements is not to conflict the one against the other, but to compound the one with the other. Without the exploration and testimony of the learned we should not have picked out or collected the Scriptures from among the debris of the middle ages, or been able to say what the books were in which the word of God was to be found. But, again, without the exposition of these books from the pulpits of a free Christianity, or without the perusal of them in the homes and among the families of the people, the way would have been still untrodden by

which the entrance of God's word giveth light unto the simple. It was learning, the high and accomplished learning of our early reformers, which pointed the way to the temple of knowledge; it is education, the sound and scriptural education of our schools and churches, which trains our people in the habit of repairing to it. It is neither the one nor the other—neither the sight of the temple nor the way which leads to it; but it is the light in the temple itself, the light of God's own word and of God's own Spirit, which makes the people wise unto salvation. They may read their Bibles at the bidding of authority, the authority of their ministers or parents; but they do not believe their Bibles at the bidding of authority, for in nothing whatever can they possibly believe but in that which they see with their own eyes, or is made palpable, it may be through an operation from on high, to the light of their own understandings. It is well that the learning and the education brought them there, and so placed them in the way of that visitation from above which befell them there. If really converted, if actually brought out of darkness into the marvellous light of the gospel, it has been done, proximately and effectually done, by the teaching of the Holy Ghost, though instrumentally and subserviently the teaching of man has had to do with it. If men would only not look at things with half an eye, we should both have a greater completeness and a greater harmony in our Churches; and neither a fanatic jealousy of learning, upon the one hand, nor, upon the other, the portly contempt of an erudite theology for the doctrine of a spiritual illumination. The learning of our universities would be more amply provided for; and these, instead of so many icebergs for bringing down the temperament of society, even to the coldness and apathy of spiritual death, would be the fountainheads of a living water to refresh, and be for the healing of the nation.

And let it not be imagined, that because this historical evidence for the canon of the Old and New Testament has been already so well expounded, it may now be left behind as a question settled and set by, and in regard to which, therefore, the services of a high erudition are no longer called for. For,

besides that you should know how and on what ground it has been settled, it is a mistake to conceive, so long as there is a vain, proud, and unquelled spirit, whether of heresy or infidelity, in the midst of us, it is altogether a mistake to suppose of this, or indeed of any question in theology, that it has yet been conclusively set by. The Church on earth is still a Church militant; and it is indeed a most grievous misconception that the triumphant argument of two or three centuries back may now go to sleep—for often may the same hostile attack be reiterated, and as often the same battle have to be fought over again. It is thus that much, very much of the scholarship of Christianity was not only called into being at the first, but must be kept in exercise ever afterwards for the defence of Christianity. It is not that I would summon you all to the high places of the field, there to signalize yourselves by deeds of championship in the battles of the faith; but as war is unavoidable, there should in every Church be a school of preparation for the war, even though for each generation but one mighty captain in the host, but one master in Israel should emerge from it. He, the chief among his fellows, might sustain the controversy, and they, the lettered and intellectual clergymen of our Church, might form the enlightened public who could appreciate his authorship and re-echo his arguments. It is thus that infidelity and error have been so often cleared away from the higher regions of our literary commonwealth, which might else have descended with most blighting and baleful influence on the places underneath. And still there is nothing in this our demand for the loftiest erudition and science in our schools of theology, which conflicts in the least with the perfect sufficiency of the Bible, and the Bible alone, for the spiritual Christianity of all our population. It is for the defence and integrity of this Bible that I would have our scholars to arise in full equipment and force, not only that they might vindicate its honours, but that they might throw the canopy of their protection over the faith of our cottage patriarchs.

And the same principle, though we have taken an illustration

of it from but one case or one question, may be recognised throughout the whole range of our scientific theology, which may be taught in all its branches in purest, and loftiest, and most academic style to the Church's ministers, without prejudice to that other, that higher manifestation, which is the common property of the Church's people—the manifestation of the truth unto the conscience; that precious and satisfying light from above which irradiates the soul of many an inquirer, who, utter stranger though he be to the methods and the scholarship of universities, can yet read with simple earnestness the word of God, and pray with simple dependence for the Spirit of God, and can say, most legitimately and warrantably say, as the result of this process—a process that might be as well realized in the poor man's hovel as in the proudest halls of philosophy—"Whereas I was once blind, now I see." All I want is, that men shall find room in their minds for both these elements, so that the one shall not be held destructive of the other, or be suffered to dispossess the other. It is both true that there is an argumentative and literary evidence outside the Bible, which might require the most accomplished of our *savans*, and he endowed with the highest powers of ratiocination, adequately to expound; but it is just as true that there is a moral and experimental evidence inside the Bible, which it is competent for the humblest of our peasantry rightly to discern. What I want is to vindicate the place and the prerogatives of both; that we might have colleges in full equipment for the one, and for the other the faithful preaching of the word in all our pulpits, and the prayerful reading of the word in all our families. Among the new lectureships of this season, there will be one by my junior and my colleague in the theological department, the great burden of which is to be the rule of faith, when I have no doubt that by the helps of a vigorous logic, and of a profound as well as voluminous erudition, that noble principle will be fully brought out which Chillingworth has embodied among the memorabilia of our profession, even that the Bible, and the Bible alone, is the great standard and depository of the religion of Protestants. And this evolves a

most important distinction between the work of the Chair and the work of the pulpit. Here the rule of faith is demonstrated ; there it is acted on. Here the Bible is set forth as encompassed with all those high claims and credentials which invest it with rightful and exclusive authority over the faith and the obedience of men ; there the Bible is opened before the eyes of all the people, and its inward contents are brought urgently and immediately to bear upon human consciences, where, in virtue of its self-evidencing power, it makes demonstration even to the simple and the unlearned of its own sufficiency, and its worthiness of all acceptance. And here again may we behold the respective places which belong, on the one hand, to the scholarship and the science of colleges ; and on the other, to that simple and scriptural preaching of the gospel to which we stand indebted for all the triumphs of conviction and conversion among the hearers of our various congregations. It is, in the first place, true that in the work and the warfare of controversy, there is a call for the learning and the wisdom of the Church's defenders, when the perversity of gainsayers imposes the task upon them of demonstrating that the word of God is the only rule of faith and of practice ; but in the second place, it is just as true, (and the Church's polity would be kept from deflecting either to the right or to the left, if we but maintained a firm hold on both these positions,) it is just as true that it is out of the contact between the word and the conscience that the light or the faith is struck out which is unto salvation ; and that this, too, is a faith which standeth not in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God. It is the professor in the academic hall to whom we should look as the likeliest instrument for the accomplishment of the first service ; the village pastor, in dealing with the humblest of his flock, or the Christian mother, with her simple-hearted boy, may be the instrument of the second.

But hitherto we have been drawing our examples from the outworks of the Christian argument, as the external evidence for the books of Scripture, and the historical or literary evidence for the general truth of Christianity ; and we can understand

how a high scholarship might be indispensable in these departments, and this be perfectly consistent with the fact, that in the real everyday work of Christianization, in the actual business of converting human souls, all that might be needed is to bring the simple sayings within the Bible itself into juxtaposition with the mind of the inquirer. But do not those sayings, it may be asked—composing, as they do, the subject-matter of Christianity—form the argument and theme of some of your professorships? Is it your only employment to go about the walls and to count the bulwarks of our Church's vineyard, so as to make it impregnable against all the force and violence of assailants from without? Is not ours a nursery for pastors as well as for polemics; and beside teaching them how to war against their adversaries, do we not teach them how to minister the gospel in their respective congregations? Surely if the defence of the vineyard be an object of importance, a still higher object, and to which the former stands but in the relation of subserviency, must be the internal cultivation of the vineyard. And accordingly, is not the Bible, which we have just been representing as the great instrument of conversion, is it not also the great theme, and if not formally, at least substantially, the great text-book of our theological seminaries? Nay, is not Biblical criticism a component part in every system of theological education? and surely this, if any thing, should carry us into the very heart and interior of the sacred volume—should bring us into contact with that very subject-matter which forms the direct and proximate antecedent to the regeneration of human souls—seeing, that though said to be born again by the Spirit, yet because it is through the Spirit shining upon the Bible, they are also said to be born again by the incorruptible seed of the Word. Here, then, if anywhere, it may well be thought, will the work of the Chair come to be most closely analogous to, and so as to form an immediate stepping-stone for the work of the pulpit. And the felt puzzle or perplexity of many an observer is how to reconcile the treatment of high and recondite scholarship which the Bible undergoes at the hands of the professor, with the simpli-

city of those Bible statements which, from the mouth of the village pastor, are of mightiest effect in subduing the people under him. Still it might appear as if the great design of our education was to raise champions for the defence of the truth, who might contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, rather than men who, in the direct enforcement of the truth, might sustain the office and discharge the functions of able ministers of the New Testament.

The Church requires both these services, and let it dispense with neither of them—we mean both protection and efficiency; but it is chiefly for the former that what may be called the learned or scholarly treatment of Scripture is required, when dealing with those heretics who labour to pervert and sophisticate the doctrine of the Bible, and garnish their own specious plausibilities with quotations in Greek and Hebrew character. We must then follow the opponents of orthodoxy to the arena which themselves have chosen; and so, to meet them on their own ground, we are necessarily thrown back on the original language of Scripture. Not so, however, when the object, instead of being polemical, is either didactic or hortatory; or when, instead of having to vindicate the truth of God against the perverse interpretations of the gainsayers, we have but to press home that truth on the understandings and consciences of the people. When this last is the business on hand, the philological criticism of Scripture is not called for; for by the universal consent of all the first-rate authorities, there is not a popular version in Christendom, where, with one or two exceptions that can be easily pointed out and guarded against, all that is essential, whether in the doctrinal or preceptive parts of the gospel, is not accurately given. This is a most comfortable testimony, however mortifying it may turn out to those unfeeling pedants who, because of their superior acquaintance with the original and the cognate languages of Scripture, would hold themselves forth as the exclusive depositaries of a cipher by which to evolve treasures and truths from the sacred volume before unheard of, and so mightily to enrich and enlarge, nay, perhaps to rectify and to reform the

existing theology of our land. Now, it is of capital importance to be told, that this is altogether a vain pretension; and it cannot be too widely proclaimed, that for the spiritual nourishment of our people, the word of life, as it exists in the secondary reservoir of a translation within their reach, is in all things of moment as available as the word of life existing in what to them are the remote and inaccessible fountainheads of the Hebrew Old and the Greek New Testament. In dealing, therefore, with our hearers, the men and women of any plain or ordinary congregation, we may reason with them just as confidently out of the English Scriptures, as Paul, in dealing with his own countrymen, reasoned with them out of the Jewish Scriptures. We are far, very far, from wishing to exonerate our students of theology from the study, in order to a familiar acquaintance with the Bible, in its original tongues—and this that all of them might be able to withstand, whilst some select and superlative few, though it were even but one man of might and of high emprise amongst them, should be able to lift the polemic arm, and lay final extinction on the neological interpretations of Germany. Still it is true, that the right polemical treatment of any given passage in the Bible is one thing, and that the right pulpit treatment of it is another and a different thing; and the question comes to be, is it not of as great importance—I hold it to be infinitely greater—that the lessons of a university should teach us how to wield and to apply the Bible in an assembly of Sabbath worshippers, as how to wield and to make application of it on the field of controversy? Let it not be said that the way to provide for this were the institution of another chair—a chair of pastoral theology. This may come in the course of our successive augmentations; but meanwhile, it were well to expand our conceptions of Biblical literature beyond that single department of it which is merely philological. The question, whether there has been a pure and right derivation of the Bible from Hebrew and Greek into English, is not the only question for a Biblical class. Over and above the phraseology of the book, there is the subject-matter of the book, not as manufactured or worked

into a systematic theology, but as lying imbedded there in its native and original form—the primary materials, as it were, of the message where it stands; and which present us with the weightiest topics of Biblical observation, though seldom brought within the range of what is commonly regarded as Biblical criticism—topics, they would have been, of most momentous interest though the same revelation had been made to us in our own vernacular tongue, and which surely are not the less momentous, although having come down to us in Greek and Hebrew they are apt to be displaced and lost sight of amid the learned disquisitions of uncial characters, and *ἅπαξ λεγόμενα*, and such other kindred matters as are to be found in the Prolegomena and Thesauruses of our most venerable tomes. Let the things of greatest weight and magnitude be done, and as far as possible let nothing be left undone. I therefore rejoice in the fulfilment at length of an object for which I have been calling out incessantly these sixteen years, or ever since my first connexion with Edinburgh—and that is the establishment of another theological professorship; and what is still more promising, is that he who fills it will give so much of his attention both to the authority of Scripture and the sense of Scripture. Between the lectureships of Dr. Cunningham and Dr. Black, in both of which I understand that the sense and subject-matter of the Bible will hold the largest place, I feel as if a great step were now making in advance towards the perfecting of our theological course.

But our efforts in the way of enlargement and extension do not stop here; and I am glad to announce that, since we last met, attention has been given to the preliminary, as well as the more strictly professional education of our students. And of all the subjects or sciences through which they have to pass in the course of their previous academic training, there is none which bears with greater directness or a more controlling influence upon our own than Moral Philosophy. For it may be said of the law of conscience, as well as of the law of Moses, that it is a schoolmaster for bringing us to Christ; and accordingly the Apostle Paul avails himself of both, in that masterly

argument by which he labours to find his way to the understanding both of Gentiles and Jews, for the most distinguishing and peculiar truths of Christianity. It must be palpable to all, how grievously this object has been lost sight of in the ethical systems of our present day; and with the express purpose to repair this deficiency, have we made choice of one who is qualified to prove how closely the conclusions of deepest science are in unison with the deepest views of evangelism. The moral philosophy which throws a deceitful garnish over the character of man, is, *toto cælo*, diverse from the moral philosophy which demonstrates our nature to be an enigma that nothing but a revelation from heaven can solve—a ruin, with it may be some beauteous fragments, which, however, can be only set up again by the restorative processes of the gospel—a moral chaos, though capable it may be of being evolved into a state of health and harmony by some such operation as that of the Spirit who moved upon the face of the waters. Let the fair exhibitions of friendship and patriotism and native humanity, and all the other varieties of spontaneous virtue be what they may, even by the dim light of nature's theology may enough be made known of nature's guilt in the eye of that supreme God who has been forgotten and disowned by it, to demonstrate a breach between heaven and earth, which nothing can heal but the knowledge of Jesus Christ and of Him crucified.

I shall rejoice if by aught I have said I can disarm the prejudice of the humble and the pious against a learned ministry, and still more, if I can disarm the pride of that erudite theology which would refuse, not the Christianity, it may be, but, what I most earnestly contend for, the intelligent Christianity, the warrantable, the logically warrantable and well-grounded faith of the veriest babe in this world's wisdom, and whose only ostensible acquisitions in this world's eye are that he reads his Bible and loves his Saviour. The mind that can look comprehensively at the subject will find place and occupancy for both; and it delights me to find that, notwithstanding the violence of our late transition—a transition not voluntary on our part, but forced upon us by the triumph of power over both the con-

science and rights of the Scottish nation—I rejoice to find that our descent, as some would term it, our descent, economically speaking, from the endowments of the State to the contributions of the people, is not to involve in it, as was feared perhaps by some of the enlightened friends of the Free Church of Scotland—is not to involve in it our descent, theologically or academically speaking, from a thorough well-trained and well-educated ministry to a ministry of vulgar, ignorant, low-bred, and low-minded fanaticism. The magnificent sum of £18,000 for the architecture of a college, and that tendered to the cause by only eighteen individuals, demonstrates of itself the unquelled reverence of our people for that high learning which signalized the John Knoxes, and the George Buchanans, and the Andrew Melvilles of other days; and our proper return for so noble a manifestation is, that we lend such a care on our part for a high popular education as shall secure a lettered and intellectual, as well as spiritual Church, that there shall be such a curriculum of high academic study, that ours may, with the blessing of God, prove as erudite and accomplished a ministry as any to be found in Christendom.

PRINCIPAL'S ADDRESS.

NOVEMBER, 1845.

THE PRAYER.

GIVE us, O Lord, to behold the impress of Thy hand upon this visible world. Thou sittest unseen in the heavens, but Thou hast made the heavens declare Thy glory. Thou no longer visitest this earth in a sensible form, yet the earth is full of Thy goodness. We behold not Thy glory as it radiates direct from Thy throne, but we behold a reflection of Thy glory from the face of that workmanship which Thou hast spread out before us. Enable us to read of Thine existence, of Thy power, of Thy righteousness therefrom, and to hold converse with that mighty though unseen Being who sits behind the elements that He has formed, and gives truth, and movement, and continuance to all things.

The two qualifications of which we hear most frequently as being in greatest demand for the public service of the Church, are piety and learning. There is this distinction, we think, to be made between them. The first we hold to be indispensable for all the office-bearers of the Church ; the second, though not indispensable for all, we hold to be most desirable for a very large class, and even indispensable for a certain, and that the highest class of the Church's office-bearers. There are times, but we should say unprosperous times, in the Church's history, when these two distinct elements, the piety and the learning, have met in conflict instead of friendly co-operation, acting as rival, nay, even as adverse and hostile elements the one to the other. There have been seasons of spiritual decay, but withal of high scholarship and talent, when an ungodly, even though it were a professional literature, looked with disdain on humble

and unlettered piety, just as it would on vulgar and degrading fanaticism, and so would utterly have nauseated the co-operation of its services. And again, there have been seasons of popular and headlong impulse, when blind, impetuous, indiscriminating zeal threatened to carry all before it, and, could it have had its own mind, would have exiled all human learning from the Church as something heathenish and unholy—alleging the revelation of the Spirit to be the only and most sufficient guidance for all Christians; and so that the lessons given forth at universities, the lengthened courses of attendance and instruction there, were all superseded by the better and higher illuminations which were received directly from above. The exclusive literary spirit—a good and desirable spirit, when not exclusive, and not contemptuous of earnest piety—predominated in the Church of England throughout the prior half of the last century, and since that time has been still more glaringly exemplified throughout the universities and among the churches of Germany. The exclusively zealous spirit—a good spirit too, when not exclusive, and not fanatically jealous of high erudition—has occasionally broken forth amongst some few of the sectaries in England, and still more signally in the same Germany, as when it effervesced into wild and tumultuous excesses amongst their Anabaptists in the days of Luther. These are instructive passages in Church history; and one important lesson to be gathered from them is the limitation or exceeding infirmity of the human understanding; as the effect of which, it is constantly vacillating between two extremes, and, because unable to combine one good with another, would place them in hostile array; so that, either wanting the zeal, the Church shall wither into a state of spiritual death, or wanting the scholarship, the Church shall be disfigured by all the erratic and senseless extravagances of a zeal without knowledge. There is one secret, we are persuaded, which, if only recognised and acted on, would mightily expedite the sacred cause of union among Christians, that noblest object of mutual deliberation and effort in our day—which is, that to effect the reconciliation of parties, who, if

not actually warring, are at least keeping aloof from each other, instead of conflicting the reigning principle of the one against the reigning and often only seemingly adverse principle of the other, the way would be, if possible, to compound them, and to find a place of occupancy for both. It is thus that learning and piety ought not to be conflicted, but compounded. They may not always meet in the same individual—the indispensable piety with the useful and desirable learning. But in a Church, made up of many offices and many individuals, there should be the most ample provision and encouragement for both. We feel quite sure that this were the right way of proceeding with the two elements of learning and piety. Both are best; and those are the best periods of the Church when both were made available to the uttermost, whether for the defence or cultivation of the vineyard. It was thus at the time of the German Reformation, and thus, too, when the great transition was effected from Popery to Protestantism in our own land. Our men of greatest scholarship, and at the same time of greatest ascendancy in the Church, were men of prayer; and we doubt not that then the ostensible leaders in the movement would know both how to appreciate and how to avail themselves of the piety without learning, whereof there occurred in those days so many bright examples in the eldership of Scotland. We will not speak, on the other hand, in the language of gratulation of those benefits which have been rendered by men of learning without piety, as, for want of the latter ingredient, they were unfit to be members, and far less office-bearers of the Church. And yet it is a befitting theme of gratitude to Him who makes even the earth to help the woman, that our cause has so often been strengthened by the labours of unsanctified intellect. It is not most assuredly for us to judge, though unable to vouch for the personal religion of Erasmus, or Grotius, or even our own George Buchanan, or Brian Walton, or Chillingworth, or Bishop Horsley: yet, without pronouncing on any of these, let us felicitate ourselves in the thought, that, even with one and the same individual, deep and varied learning, on the one hand, and deep devoted piety,

on the other, are not incompatible ; and that, from the days of Paul the Apostle to those of Jonathan Edwards, there has been such a goodly array of names in whom the life of faith has been blended with the services, not of a vain but true philosophy—at once the Church's most productive labourers and brightest ornaments.

And here, as standing closely related to this subject, we cannot but express our satisfaction with a recent arrangement adopted by the Free Church of Scotland. To meet our unprovided congregations, still so numerous, and withal increasing at such a rate that we may not be able to overtake them for years by an adequate supply of regular and fully-trained probationers, there was a disposition to confer license and ministerial ordination on men of warm and earnest, though unlettered piety, if but gifted with the requisite scriptural knowledge and requisite fluency for the public services of a congregation ; and there can be no doubt that the services of such men might be rendered greatly available, and this for a higher purpose than merely keeping these congregations together, even for building them up in the faith, and for sustaining, through the indispensable grace fetched down from heaven by prayer, the spiritual religion of families. And yet the proposal to confer license on these men was resisted, or rather so far modified, that while admittance to the regular ministerial charge is shut against them, save through a prescribed curriculum of college studies, still the utmost advantage can be taken of their labours on the field of Christian usefulness. A distinct office has been assigned for them, and a distinct and distinguishing title conferred upon it. They are to be employed, not in the capacity and with the name of probationers, but in the capacity and with the name of catechists. I confess my partiality for the multiplication and wide employment of such men in the Church. I disclaim all fellowship, either in thought or feeling, with the lordly contempt or intolerance of those learned theologians who, from the eminence of their portly erudition, could look superciliously or with distrust on the labours of such men in the vineyard of the gospel—men who, speaking

plainly yet impressively out of the fulness of their Christianized hearts, might operate as a fermenting leaven for good in their respective localities ; and with the blessing of God upon their work, be the instruments in His hand for the diffusion of a like spirit and piety and Christian worth, all kindred to their own, among the families of Scotland. I do not see how without their aid we shall be able to open a large or speedy access to the hearts and households of our common people, so as to assail with effect the strongholds of corruption in cities, or to penetrate, and far less to pervade, the masses of a sorely neglected population. When I look at the urgency of an interest so pressing and practical as this, I scarcely know how to express my utter sense of repugnancy and distaste, when told of the degradation or the danger which lies in the employment of men as functionaries because they have not had the full university education, or are not able to combat with learned infidelity in sentences of Greek and Hebrew character. The *odi profanum vulgus* of the Egyptian priesthood, who, wrapt in hieroglyphic mystery, forbade the access of all but the initiated to their temples, is not more hateful in my eyes than is that freezing interdict of certain doctors or dignitaries, which, if given way to, would lock up the bread of life from the multitude, and lay obstruction on the free circulation among our streets and lanes of those waters of life which are for the healing of the people.

But how is it that people will not make room in their minds for more than one idea upon this question, which operates to the exclusion of every other, as if it filled up all the little capacity they have, and so monopolized the whole field of their intellectual vision ? How is it they will not perceive that two good things may not be incompatible with each other—on the one hand, a most laborious and devoted agency of catechists, and on the other, a highly educated and erudite body of clergymen ? They have begun to see this now even in the Church of England, where, instead of regarding their Oxford and Cambridge as the only fountainheads of Christian usefulness throughout the parishes of the land, they, after much hesita-

tion, and in the face still of many struggling antipathies, do at length recognise the possible efficiency of laymen in the work of religious instruction—as may be seen in their increasing patronage of district visitations, and Sabbath schools, and pastoral aid societies. In Scotland we have long been accustomed, through the medium of our elders, to the coadjutorship of laymen in the business of spiritual cultivation; and now that the order of catechists is on the eve of being more fully and formally recognised, and we trust far more frequently drawn upon for their services than heretofore, who does not see that we can all the better afford to elevate the scholarship of the higher officials in our Church, and indefinitely to raise the standard of their professional education? We are opening up a channel by which to give larger and wider scope than hitherto for the efforts of unlettered piety, and thus make its services available to the uttermost for the Christian good of our people; and is not this the very reason why, without injury to the people, but for the great ultimate benefit both of themselves and of the Church at large, we might now proceed to the great work of perfecting the education of our licentiates, to whom we look for the main and the permanent supply of gospel ministrations? We have heard some of our friends give utterance to the apprehension lest, by the employment of catechists, our Church should be vulgarized. It will be our fault if this employment of them be not followed up by the very contrary effect; for in virtue of this expedient, we shall feel ourselves all the more at liberty to neutralize, nay, more than neutralize, the dreaded mischief, by a counteractive operation in our colleges. Let us first discharge ourselves, as we best may, of the justice that we owe to the urgent religious necessities of our vacant congregations; and on this deep, though some would call it, this shallow basis, but we say, on this deep and sound basis, on the foundation of that sacredness, which is the beginning or first principle of wisdom, we should rejoice that there arose a lettered and intellectual Church, not to shed a withering operation around it, or cause a blight to descend from its eminences on the piety of our cottage patriarchs, but to enlist the higher

as well as lower classes of society on the side of that common Christianity which is one and the same for both ; so that the very highest minds of the country, and whose suffrages are of such ascendant influence over the public at large, might do homage to that evangelism which forms the sustenance and moral health of our general population. And we mistake it, if we think that, among a people thus done justice to, there will be aught like a fanatical repugnance to the high scholarship of their ministers. On the contrary, among our well-taught peasantry there is a reverence for college education ; and we know not of many congregations, where the reputed learning of the clergyman would not be liked and rejoiced in as a matter of felt complacency even by the poorest of its members. Let us but do our uttermost for the spiritual wants of the people, and with such an instrumentality as we can at present command ; and instead of having aught to fear from their hostility to our literary institutes, will there be a demand and a preference for those higher ecclesiastical labourers, whom, at our colleges and our halls, it is our business to prepare for them.

Having thus adverted to the variety of offices in the Church, let me for one moment farther advert to a desire sometimes felt in such strength and urgency as to act with moral compulsion upon the young more particularly, in their choice of the clerical profession. Would that the spirit of Christian usefulness were increased a hundredfold amongst us, and that an affection for human souls were to become the operating principle which should draw forth a vastly greater number of labourers than now come forward to the harvest of a population far too plenteous for the workmen that we have yet been able to supply. But let it not be said that we are laying any barrier in the way of a consummation so desirable by the high scholarship that we require for clergymen. Our vindication is, that there are offices besides that of an ordained minister, and by the discharge of which most important contributions might be made to the Christian good of families, and to which offices we do not annex the condition of an academical education or a

lengthened attendance upon colleges. You will thus see that our demand for the high learning of clergymen, and our encouragement of the piety that without such learning is the best qualification for elders, and catechists, and Sabbath-school teachers, that these two, so far from being in a state of antagonism, according to our view of it, do, in fact, lend mutual support and consistency the one to the other. And it is thus that when consulted by those who aspire to the ministry, and complain of the difficulties which the curriculum throws in their way, our reply often is, that though these difficulties do exist, and may be insuperable in one direction, there are other directions for Christian philanthropy besides, which I should like to see occupied in tens and fifties and hundreds by the religious and intelligent laymen of our Church, that a varied and extensive agency may arise in the midst of us fully equipped for the work, and girded for a strenuous and determined warfare against the irreligion and profligacy of our age.

Let it be our hope, therefore, as it is assuredly our earnest desire, that we shall ever so conduct the methods of this institute as to make it palpable to all, that to popularize our Church is not necessarily to vulgarize it, but that our future ministers shall go forth of our class-rooms with as high accomplishments in scholarship and science as any in Christendom. The experience of the two last sessions, or two first since the Disruption, amply sustains this anticipation. The first, the indispensable qualification for the gospel ministry throughout all its departments, is devoted personal religion. But as Paul, the most learned of all the apostles, while as holy and humble as any, was also the most efficient of them all, and not less qualified for holding converse with the barbarian, because pre-eminently fitted for converse with the Greek, so let it ever be our high aim so to train and to equip our aspirants for the ministry, that whilst each is richly furnished with the wisdom of sacredness from on high by which to speak powerfully home to all consciences, and revered for his piety shall be everywhere an honoured and welcome visitor among the habitations of the poor, he may furthermore be equal to the task of confronting,

as Paul did at Athens, the pride of a hostile and contemptuous literature, and of adapting his argument whether to the prejudices or the powers of all classes in society.

Having thus far cleared my way to the entertainment of such topics as are purely collegiate and academical, let me now explain the arrangements of the winter.

I dare not incur the hazard of exciting the pathos and profound regrets of this assembly by saying all I might on the bereavement which a mysterious though all-wise Providence has been pleased to inflict upon us by the death of Dr. Welsh. This institute, of which he was so distinguished a member, will ever associate with his memory a sense of grateful obligation for high services. The College fabric now on the eve of its commencement, and to which, I might add, our choice and rapidly increasing and even already our well-stored library, might be regarded as all his own. And beyond the circle of our Free Church, there must be the general feeling of a heavy loss, in that he was arrested on a most promising career of authorship, when engaged in supplying what might well be termed a great desideratum in British literature, a good Church History. His first volume, all that was published before his death, will ever abide a standing monument to the erudition, and classic taste, and scholarlike accomplishments of its author. Would to God that the lesson of mortality given forth by so near and affecting an example of it—that lesson which of all others is the oftenest repeated, yet the soonest and the oftenest forgotten—were to tell with all the force and feeling which it ought on the hearts of survivors, more especially on those survivors who, years before him in the journey of life, are now pressing hard on the confines of both worlds, on the twilight of their earthly existence, and on the dawn of their eternity.

The arrangements wherewith this lamented vacancy has been followed up are well known to the public, and I may confidently add, well and universally approved by them. Erudition alone might suffice for the preparation of a mere history; but it requires the combination of erudition and logic to give what the French call an *histoire raisonnée*. In the

hands of Dr. Cunningham the history of theological opinions will become historical theology—a most enlarging and liberalizing study, and peculiarly fitted to emancipate the mind from the thralldom of an excessive deference to human authority. Let us hope that in the contemplation of those systems and controversies which have passed in such rapid succession from one age to another of the Church, we shall learn better than we have yet done to call no man master, and to take our theology, not from the fitful and fluctuating speculations of mere adventurers on the field, not even from the most honoured fathers and founders whether of a reformed creed or a reformed polity, and whose ponderous volumes, it may be, are of highest name and greatest ascendancy in our schools;—but making our fearless appeal from these, that we shall learn to take our theology direct from that unchanging word of God, the Sun of Revelation—that great and stable luminary in the spiritual firmament, which is the same to-day, and yesterday, and for ever. One precious result of a comprehensive and well-weighed historical theology, the exhibition unfortunately as yet of endless divergencies, would be the discovery of some connecting principle by which to recall them—some rallying watchword that might harmonize the jarring elements, and expedite that blessed union to which at the present time there is at least a disposition to converge. Heaven grant that by a descent of the wisdom which is from above, the secret may at length be evolved by which to combine the two high and sacred interests of first pure, then peaceable, so as to fulfil the prayer and prediction of the Saviour, and from which we learn that on the unity of Christians there hinges the regeneration of the world. We shall not despair.

Of the new Professor in the junior class of theology, I need say nothing. His printed testimonials are to be found everywhere in his own precious works, both of doctrinal and practical theology, known and read of all men. I will not speak of my own personal satisfaction in breathing the same atmosphere with those who combine properties which are often to be found apart—the deeply evangelical with the purely and

thoroughly academic ; but I will express my hope that the number of first courses we have had within these walls—two last year, the junior theology and ethical science, and two now, the junior theology again and church history—will have some effect in breaking down the inveterate Scottish habit and Scottish preference for the business of our higher university classes being conducted wholly and exclusively by the delivery of lectures from the Chair, without any cognizance being taken, whether by examinations or exercises, of the students whom we are addressing—all action on the one side, but no reaction on the other, at least none that we have any knowledge of, so long as this system is persevered in of holding it enough that our instructions are thrown broad-cast among the listeners, or perhaps among the non-listeners, with no further care or culture on our part. I am quite aware of the weighty and energetic protest lifted by Professor Jardine of Glasgow, in his *Outlines of Philosophical Education*, against this practice ; and perhaps, instead of the inveterate Scottish, I should have termed it the inveterate Edinburgh habit and preference for what I might well call the broad-cast husbandry. I have long thought that we might borrow with advantage a lesson both from Glasgow and from the English universities, so as to infuse a great deal more of the practical into our own courses ; and, therefore, I do hope that in our theological and church history and ethical classes, and eventually our class of logic, the lectureship will not be superseded but superadded to by such methods of converse between the teachers and the taught as will secure a busy reciprocation of mind with mind in the two parties ; and so the comfortable assurance that the lessons, on the one hand, have been thoroughly understood, and the learners, on the other, are really making progress.

Ethical science, which had at one time a place within the field of theology, should still be regarded as conterminous therewith, having the same close relation to our science which the law bears to the gospel, and embracing therefore the same high office of a schoolmaster for bringing men to Christ. Its direct object, so very direct that it might almost stand for a defini-

tion, is to teach what man ought to be ; and then it remains for observation to tell what man actually is—exhibiting a distance and deficiency so immeasurably beneath the high standard of the absolutely right and good, as should make him feel that he is an outcast from the favour of God, and under the guidance of the wisdom that is from above might shut him up unto the faith. The habit is to regard the ethical as rudimental to the divinity classes ; because, in virtue of the natural theology expounded in the former, the professor in the latter is so far relieved from the necessity of discussing the credentials of his subject. But to a certain extent it has to do with the contents as well as the credentials of our science—our great initial theme, when we enter on the subject-matter of Christianity, being the moral depravation of our race, which, along with the cognate topics of human guilt, and of the responsibility or judicial reckoning to which we stand exposed, is in part shone upon by the light of nature as well as the light of revelation. We are further aware, that in ethics, as well as in logic, there is a mental science which has been grievously perverted to the object of unsettling the foundations of both. There is a certain vicious transcendentalism both in the ethical and mental speculations of Germany, which at one time threatened the same mischief as did the Scripture criticism of Germany. We believe that the latter mischief is now effectually disarmed. It has been said of profound learning, that it has the property of Achilles' spear, in healing the wounds which itself had inflicted. If lofty talent *will* take its wayward direction on the side of sophistry and mysticism, then may it require a talent alike lofty, on the side of reason and truth, to overmatch and neutralize it. It will indeed prove a noble achievement ; and I am not without the high hope that, within these walls, something will be done which might help to realize it, to disarm that wizard power wherewith the infidelity of our continental speculatists is now operating partly on the ignorance and partly on the imagination of the reading public in our own land ; and, in the light of a resistless demonstration, to make it clear as day that a sound philosophy is at one with a sound faith.

But to be fully equipped for this high service, we should have a professorship of logic as well as of ethics, and logic, too, with a special application to the science of theology. I do not mean that, to make room for this application, you are to impair the completeness of the lectureship, or to depart in the least from the methods of a strict philosophy. I know it to be the apprehension of many, that theology cannot be brought into contact or fellowship with any of the sciences without superficializing them, as if they had been thereby brought within the infection of something ignoble, of something fitted to enfeeble or dilute the staple of all the hardy intellectual products which it is brought to bear upon, and so for the rigour and the precision, and the purity of demonstrations, fashioned after the high academic model, to substitute the meagre and showy representations which any popular declaimer might conjure up from a very slender substratum of truth or of argument. It is all very possible to inflict such degradation upon the sciences, but in a thousand other ways than by a contamination from our dreaded theology, to which there attaches, in its own nature at least, or by any necessity, no such weakening or withering influence as is here ascribed to it, as might be proved by its manifold achievements in the field of controversy, when an irrefragable logic has been enlisted on the side of the Christian argument—a logic competent to grapple with the fallacies of Hume, or to lay prostrate, as has been done by the masterly hand of Butler, a whole host of plausibilities that had long been gloried in by the enemies of our faith. On the moment, indeed, that one enters upon such a vindication, the names of Turretin, and Leibnitz, and Samuel Clarke, and Jonathan Edwards, and a hundred more, rush upon the memory, to confute the charge of there being aught in theology essentially to relax the powers, or that is in the least prejudicial to mental exercises and a mental discipline of the highest order. But, without dwelling either on the illustrious works or illustrious names that stand associated with the literature of our science, let me state one great remaining achievement, that, if not yet adequately done, I

should like to see perfected in a chair of logic—not of logic as limited, by Whately, to the process of deduction alone, but of logic as comprehensive both of the inductive and the deductive; or, to speak more technically, of the logic that concerns itself with the truth of the premises as well as soundness of the inferences therefrom; or, in other words, that verifies the minor and major proposition, as well as rightly arranges the terms of the syllogism, and rightly educes the conclusion. Give me such a logic that takes cognizance of all which belongs to evidence, and will therefore demand a firm inductive basis for the settlement of every question which comes under the category of the *quid est*, or lies within the domain of observational truth. Thus prepared, let the historical evidence for Christianity, and in favour of its witnesses, based on an experimental knowledge of man, be put into the balance with the doctrinal objections against Christianity, based on our assumed knowledge of God and of His ways; and then let us say, whether, on comparing the solid inductive basis which the former rests upon with the total want of aught like an adequate inductive basis for the latter, the faith of Christianity does not stand in the same position to the infidelity which is opposed to it, as the modern science, which rests on the philosophy of Bacon, does to the airy and unsupported hypothesis of the old schoolmen.

We should now be drawing to a close. We have yet made no appointment for a chair of logic: but for the first time we have gone beyond the domain of the moral and intellectual sciences, and can now announce the accession to our numbers of a distinguished *savant* and labourer in the philosophy of the material world. I look on the voice of a conscience within us as the phenomenon which speaks most powerfully of a God to the ear of nature. But when we go beyond ourselves, or rather, beyond the spiritual department of ourselves, and look around on all that is palpable to the eye of the senses, there is a distinction full of import, I conceive, to the cause of natural theology, a distinction but recently made, and, if I may judge from the still more recent works on theism, not yet sufficiently

appreciated—I mean the distinction which obtains between the laws of matter and the dispositions of matter. To illustrate my meaning, let me again refer, as I have often done, and always with a most grateful recollection of the lessons which I have received from him, to one of the fine generalizations of Professor Robison, when, in the arrangement he makes of the physical sciences, he designates natural philosophy as the science of successive, and natural history as the science of contemporaneous nature ;—it being the office of the one, or natural philosophy, to register the events which take place in the material universe, and classify them into laws ; and the office of natural history to register the objects which have place therein, and classify them according to their resemblances. Now, if it be true that they are the dispositions, and not the laws, which furnish far the most striking, and frequent, and palpable indications of design in the world around us, then, as the dispositions come by Robison's definition within the department of natural history, and the laws within that of natural philosophy, it will be seen how natural history is far more replete than natural philosophy with the evidences for a God ; and how far the largest contributions to the cause of theism which have been gathered from the field of external nature, are supplied from the former, and not from the latter of these two sciences. Let us avail ourselves of the distinction made by Professor Robison ; and then within the limits of a single sentence there might be condensed the weightiest argument for a God which can be gathered from the contemplation of visible things. It might be given thus—that if the arrangements of an existing natural history were destroyed, all the forces or laws of our existing natural philosophy were unable to replace them. And therefore, if it can be demonstrated that ever a time was when these arrangements were not, or when our present organized races, whether of the animal or vegetable creation, had no existence, it is at the commencement of these, or the origination of those plants and living creatures by which the earth is now peopled, that we obtain the nearest view, as if in the light of an experimental manifestation, of the fiat and interposal of a

God. And it is here that geology—that science on which infidelity at one time founded her highest hopes—steps forward to do us noble service, presenting us with the very data on which to base our argument, so as mightily to strengthen and sustain the evidence for a natural theology, which is rapidly converging, in proportion as her speculations make way for her discoveries, or her fancies for her findings, towards a thorough agreement with the theology of revelation.

In the lessons of Dr. Fleming you will be presented with geology in its most recent form—a mighty recommendation in the case of a science which till lately has been the sport of a thousand fluctuations; but which now, I believe, has found a surer footing, and is making rapid progress on the solid pathway of observation. So long as she keeps this pathway, be assured that you have nothing to fear from her discoveries; and, as I know few things more delightful than to meet with the confirmations of our faith in the study of those connexions which obtain between secular and sacred history, I promise you an enjoyment all akin to this when the harmonies are pointed out to view between the volume of nature and the volume of revelation. But, over and above, I have the confident feeling, and it is a confidence in which I am sure you will all participate, that in the academic lessons of one whom, without fear of contradiction, I would characterize as the first of British zoologists, we shall be presented with such a view of organic nature—that department which, of all others in the panorama of sensible things, most teems with the evidences of a Deity, as will fortify the mind against the crudities and flippancies which might have passed current and done a world of mischief in days of comparative ignorance, but which, now when they are repeated, and plausibly or eloquently set forth, as a few months ago, by the unknown author of a work entitled “*Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation*,” meet with a crushing exposure at the hands of men who are at once sound in philosophy and sound in faith. Accordingly, it delights me to observe in the advertisement of Dr. Fleming’s *Lectures on Natural Science*, that its truths will be employed in the illustration

of the Scriptures and the establishment of the first principles of natural theology. And here I cannot resist the allusion, to a retrospect common to each of us, when, at the outset of our professional career, we lived and laboured in contiguous parishes, and after the intermediate movements of a course chequered with variety, during which, for many years, we, in our distant and diverse walks of employment, had well-nigh lost sight of each other, we find ourselves conducted by the hand of Providence to be fellow-workers, side by side, on one and the same field of usefulness—and this at the bidding of a principle, and for the support and promotion of a cause alike dear to us both.

But here I must again recur to the imagination or the fear of many, that to theologize the sciences, if I may use such an expression, were to superficialize them; or, in other words, and as I heard it put the other day, that for full and academic courses on the respective branches of human learning, we of the Free Church College were to satisfy ourselves with lectureships, with mainly the design and after the fashion of the Bridgewater Treatises. There cannot be a greater misconception. We admit it as a glorious truth, and in which all theologians might well rejoice as most honourable to their high theme, that on every science, and every subject, indeed, of human contemplation, a natural theology might be raised—so instinct are all things with God. And accordingly there is a natural theology of anatomy, as has been most felicitously expounded by Dr. Paley; and to the full as interesting, though not yet so thoroughly explored, a natural theology of botany; and, in short, a distinct natural theology might be shewn to arise in beauteous efflorescence from each and every one of the sciences. Yet we zealously affirm, that a professor of any of the sciences may impregnate it with all its theology, and this without the abridgment or extenuation of any of its lessons. To establish this assertion, we shall not, although we might, appeal to the undoubted truth, that by a reference to final causes, the progress of discovery, as in anatomy, has been greatly accelerated. We have still another principle to allege in vindication of our argument, and, as we can afford to state

it but briefly, we crave your attention to it. We ask whether it would not speed your acquaintance with the works of any master in human art—whether you would not discover all the sooner their otherwise hidden beauties, and describe with all the greater fulness and fidelity their characteristic peculiarities, did you but know what the reigning idea was, the leading design and characteristic genius of the great master-spirit, as of *Rafaele* or *Michael Angelo*, from whom they emanated? There is a felicitous expression, I think of *Dugald Stewart*, who speaks of the style of the Divine workmanship; and our confidence is, that were this workmanship more studied with a reference to the Divinity who framed it, were the great central idea of Him who devised all and directs all more present to the mind in the contemplation and study of His works—were creation surveyed and investigated, both in its phenomena and its laws, with a more habitual and deep sense of its Creator—we are persuaded that such a habitude of mind, so far from obstructing our inquiries, or displacing any of the lessons of philosophy, would act with a powerful and presiding influence on the mind of the student, so as both to give a higher tone and a firmer staple to all his mental acquisitions. Neither the explanations nor the uses of nature will be less fully or less forcibly given, because of a perpetual and deeply felt reference, whether in the mind of the lecturer or his hearers, from nature to nature's God. On this subject we can make one triumphant appeal to what might well be termed the Augustan age of philosophy in Europe, when *Newton* and *Leibnitz* exhibited throughout all their speculations and studies, so profound a sense of the Divinity who both formed the philosophers and gave to their philosophy all its materials—a most refreshing contrast to the whole tone and spirit of our more recent philosophy; and in this age of little men who look to our theology as altogether an ignoble speculation, we feel an abundant recompense for their contempt, when we behold the homage that was rendered to it by the colossal intellects of other days.

Let it not be understood, then, that our course of natural science will be less complete because pervaded throughout by

the recognition of a Deity ; or that it will be either less copious in the description of phenomena, or less rigorously academic in the demonstration of causes, because of its references to Him who is *causa causarum*—that Being who, to adopt the eloquent language of Robert Hall, sits enthroned on the riches of the universe. It will of course be understood, that what we have said of the other classes, in regard to the practice of examinations, does not apply to a class where attention to the lectureship is ever kept on the alert by the exhibition of illustrative specimens ; and when at the termination of the hour there are ample opportunities not only to examine these, but for putting questions to the professor. Even in the other classes the examination is restricted to our own professional students, and not applied to the general students unless they signify a wish for it.

Before I conclude, I have one observation more to make on the subject of partial and insufficient courses, and this from a cause that is now beginning to be felt even in the very highest of our universities. The courses, then, have everywhere fallen behind the sciences, and this for the very obvious reason, that the sciences have all shot ahead of the courses ; or, in other words, they have, in the rapid progress of new discoveries and doctrines, attained to such a colossal magnitude that it is impossible to overtake them. The days were when the encyclopædia of all that was really worth in learning could be fully traversed before the student entered upon theology ; but philosophy in all its branches has now reached to such a height and depth and length and breadth, and is expanding at such a rate every year in all these dimensions, that a full course of philosophy as preparatory to any one of the professions, be it legal or medical or theological, is wholly out of the question, so as imperatively to call for a new modelling of the preliminary courses. We may still perhaps keep by the old classes ; but these classes can never carry us through more than a very humble portion of their now immensely augmented sciences. Take natural philosophy for an example : why, it is but the other day that, in the College of Glasgow, this class, to ease

itself of the repletion under which it laboured, hived off, and very properly, another professorship, admirably adapted to the growing wants of the age—we mean its professorship of engineering. We of the Free Church College in Edinburgh will not think, I believe, of following this example. There will be no lessons, I should imagine, on engineering ever given within our walls. But it is not unlikely—for at this moment an open question—whether we shall have our own class of natural philosophy; and I shall only say that, if decided in the affirmative, then ought it to be our high and honest aim, without vainly attempting to pursue this mighty subject into its manifold applications, to have it taught in as purely an academic style as in any of the older universities; and so as that ours might not only be a seminary for well-trained theologians, but that men of science and accomplished *savans* might have respect to it for the purposes of general education. However this may be determined, I cannot but express it as my earnest hope, that natural history, and this for the sake of its far more abundant contributions to natural theology, will henceforth be held by us as an essential preliminary to our theological course.

I cannot close this attempt to reconcile the two objects of spirituality and science in a Church, without adverting to the utterance of the Psalmist—"Bless the Lord, O my soul, and *all that is within me*, bless his holy name." Let not the homage of the intellect, that power which, next to conscience, stands the highest and most illustrious among the faculties of the inner man—let not the nobler and loftier part of our nature be withheld from this act of consecration to Him who is the Father of our spirit, and gifted it with all its endowments. And having surrounded us with such a glorious and diversified theatre on which to expatiate, let us not forget the purpose for which He hath made His great and wonderful works, even to be remembered and sought out of all those that have pleasure therein.

PRINCIPAL'S ADDRESS.

NOVEMBER, 1846.

THE PRAYER.

O GOD, we rejoice that Thou hast not left Thyself without a witness. The revolving year is full of God. Thou comest forth in the beauty and verdure of spring; Thou comest forth in the height and glory of summer; Thou comest forth in the richness and luxuriance of autumn; and Thou comest forth in the tempest and in the whirlwind of winter. We thank Thee for the light and evidence of nature; but above all, we thank Thee for the surpassing light and evidence of revelation. And we rejoice that when nature but told us of our danger, revelation hath told us of our deliverance. May we find all our comfort in the faith of its blessed testimonies; and when like to be overborne by a sense of guilt, or the apprehension of vengeance, may we flee for refuge to the hope set before us in the gospel.

The first Principal I ever knew, my earliest patron, was Dr. M'Cormic of the United College of St. Andrews, the near relative, if not the descendant, of a like functionary, the famous Principal Carstairs, and author of his *Life*—a book, however, of no brilliant repute, but still extant, and to be found slumbering on the shelves both of our own and other libraries. Though not a man of very profound learning, he had much to obtain for him the good liking of all his colleagues; a person of rare conviviality and humour, the ever-welling fountain of a thousand pleasantries, and whose flashes of humour were often flashes of intelligence—a matter not to be wondered at, for if wit lie in the perception of incongruities, one cannot well discern the incongruity of things, without at least some, and it may be a considerable discernment of the things themselves. One day,

when in the midst of his compeers at a festive, but at the same time academic board, he came forth with this definition of the amount of scholarship necessary for making a good Principal: that he should know more of all the sciences than all the other professors put together, but with this exception, that he should not know so much of any one of the sciences as did the professor of that science. I should like you to fix in your minds the precise position which the person thus defined is made to occupy, as it is a position from which such a survey might be made, and such lessons might be learned, as will prove not only of signal use in the walks of a higher philosophy, but will serve for the guidance of those who are still toiling at the work of acquisition, and are even but yet a little way forward from the commencement of their college studies.

First, then, it may be conceived of such a position as I have now tried to illustrate in your hearing, that it is not a very high one. The person who occupies it is but second-rate in all the sciences, although third-rate in none of them. He may be a man of accomplished but not of deep learning, and it may be thought too, not of deep philosophy, with a sort of thin-spread universality reaching over the whole encyclopædia of human knowledge, and perhaps downward a certain way among its upper strata, but never to the bottom or the lowermost strata of any one of its sections. Some may thus be disposed to regard him as a superficialist, and not a *savant*, as one who takes a bird's-eye view of the sciences, without going far into the recesses of any. Yet is it such a view as might bring within his reach, and so reveal to him, what others now among the depths of their respective subjects might altogether miss; nay, what the likelihood of their never coming within sight of is in very proportion to the intense and exclusive engagement of each with the specialities of his own department. For one needs not go to the bottom of any one science before that he can discover the relations and resemblances between them, or is able to assign those generalities which are common to them all—a great and lofty achievement, and the proper office of what has been termed the *scientia scientiarum*, perhaps the

best and most available definition that has yet been given of metaphysics, whose place is that of command, and of widely comprehensive survey over the whole field of human knowledge. It is thus that a walk is struck out, in the prosecution of which one finds room for the strenuous exercise of his largest and most powerful faculties, even though he keeps outside from all the other sciences, or rather from the peculiar arcana of all the other sciences but his own ; a walk not of airy transcendentalism, but in which something better than recondite speculations, solid discoveries might be made, which do not fall in the way of the mere astronomer, or the mere geologist, or the mere mathematician, of whom it is very possible that the farther on in their respective pursuits they are the farther away from that domain which lies before the eye of him who might well be termed the generalissimo of the sciences, though he has neither cast his sounding-line into the lowest depths, nor yet mastered, in all their fulness and variety, the doctrines and details of any one of them.

But before proceeding to the uses of this contemplation, let me quote a few of those instances in the history of philosophy which prove that it is nothing fanciful, but that it has an actual and experimental basis to rest upon.

We first, then, appeal to Lord Bacon as a great master on the field of general science, and rightfully so, though glaringly deficient, nay, palpably wrong, in many of the particular sciences ; insomuch, that while he pointed out the way of investigation to others, he miserably failed in attempting the way himself ; and thus for the results of that sober, and vigilant, and careful experience which he recommended with such effect to the disciples of his school, we have but his own crude and confident speculations. It is true that he did not claim a mastery over all the sciences ; nor do the methods of induction apply either to moral or mathematical truth. But the father as he was of the inductive philosophy, one might have expected beforehand, that upon this his own domain the efforts which he made would have both stood the test and been crowned with the triumph of his own principles. Instead of

which, look at the very first of his hundred lessons of what he calls natural history. The subject of it is percolation; and there he tells us to "dig a pit upon the sea-shore, somewhat above the sea-water, and sink it as deep as the low-water mark, and as the tide cometh in, it will fill with water fresh and potable; for that the sea-water passing or straining through the sand, leaveth the saltiness." Had there been a college for the observational sciences in these days, I certainly should not have made Lord Bacon the professor of chemistry. But hear him further: In one of his miscellaneous tracts on human philosophy, written in praise of knowledge, he holds a reckoning with the astronomers, and plainly evinces his contempt, not merely for the ancients, who dealt in cycles and epicycles, but for the Copernicans of his own day, whom he styles the carmen or charioteers that draw the earth about; and therefore I should not have made him professor of natural philosophy. Yet with all these blunders in the particular sciences, such in general was his *scientia scientiarum*, that he would have made the very best Principal, better even than Sir Isaac Newton, had he lived in the same age, who, on the other hand, would have shed immortal honour on the Chair of natural philosophy. And to keep a little longer by the same method of illustrating these mental varieties between man and man, Leibnitz, the contemporary of Newton, would have been a better Principal than he—an office he would have sustained most admirably, even though the mental sciences had been superadded in his university to the physical, with theology to the bargain. And coming down to our own times, the fine generalizations of Humboldt mark him out for this academic supremacy, even with such men as La Place and Cuvier for his colleagues, though greatly inferior to the one in the mathematico-physical, and to the other in natural history. These magnificent sketches of his, as set forth in *Kosmos* and other of his works, less profound, it must be admitted, than they are comprehensive, evince such a commanding, though it may be a comparatively outside view of the natural sciences, as to bespeak a thorough judgment, both of the bearing which these sciences have on each other,

and of the places which they respectively occupy. There is room for a similar estimate of different men and different minds, engaged not with several sciences, but with the several sections of one and the same science. It is conceivable, nay, it is often exemplified, that a man not so profound, not so thoroughly conversant in any of these sections as some one or other of his fellow-labourers, may yet, in virtue of that comprehensiveness which gives a truer discernment of the whole subject in its more general characteristics and larger features, be better qualified than them all for the history of the science. I cannot figure of Montucla, that he went so far as either Newton, or Euler, or the Bernouillis in their respective walks of investigation, although his *History of Mathematics* may very possibly be a more perfect work of its kind than could have been produced by any of the far more illustrious geometers and analysts whom I have now named. And to pass from this to another scientific history, though only of a few weeks old, the *History of Mental Philosophy*, by Morell, it is not necessary to imagine that he has pervaded the whole authorship of Des Cartes, and Malebranche, and Leibnitz, and Kant, and Fichte, and Schlegel, and the other writers, French and English, who pass under his review; or, in other words, it was not necessary that he should have traversed and filled up these manifold departments of study, so as to master, in all its doctrines and details, the intellectual system of each—and this to prepare him for coming forth with the masterly view which he has given of their respective speculations. And yet it is such a view as will mightily enlarge the acquaintance of the British public, both with the history and present state of philosophy on the continent of Europe—nay, as will in all probability supersede much of the reading that would have been otherwise expended direct on the foreign authors themselves; and help on to the secure establishment of a philosophy that will at once defend us from this perpetual onset of wayward and fantastic theories which have hitherto so unsettled the minds of men, and putting both scepticism and speculation at rest, will insure for us a safe and confident progress in all the sciences.

But it is high time to educe the lessons, if any, which might be drawn from the contemplation that now engages us. And first, we learn from it not the varieties only, but the limits of human genius.

We have seen that each distinct labourer on the field of human knowledge, whose vocation, which we shall suppose him to prosecute successfully, is some one of the particular sciences, that he, of course, is the most conversant, and therefore the most to be trusted, both with the peculiar doctrines of his own science, and the peculiar evidence on which it rests ; insomuch that, as he journeys onward upon his own separate pathway, he gets beyond the ken even of him who, on the other hand, is the far better qualified for a general view of all the sciences. But if beyond the ken even of him who occupies this central, this commanding station of survey and superintendence over the whole domain, how much farther, I ask you to consider, beyond the ken of another labourer, the master of some other science distinct from his own, radiating as it were in another direction, and diverging towards a remote portion of the territory which he cultivates with utmost assiduity, and it may be with the most brilliant success ? Do you not perceive that, in very proportion to the intensity of his regards, and so to the fulness and amount of his acquisitions or even of his discoveries in the one science, may he not be the more, but all the less incompetent to pronounce or dogmatize on the methods or the truths of another science ? In the vast and ever-extending, as well as every day more prolific field of human knowledge, there is a growing and more clamant necessity than hitherto for more frequent divisions and subdivisions of mental labour, and when each in his own section prosecutes his own task very much out of sympathy and out of sight from all the rest, free of disturbance, and safe from the inroads of the other labourers in other places of the field. Nor am I aware of any general disposition on the part of scientific men to make incursion beyond their own domain, on the separate but rightful and proper domain of any of their fellows ; or, if they do, sure I am that an enlightened public would not listen to the voice which they lifted

there as a voice of authority. The mere astronomer would not be heard on a question of geology; nor would the mere anatomist, known to be such and nothing more, be heard in a question of geometry or economics. But each would be deferred to as supreme in his own department. Now, all we lay claim to is, that even our science, the science of theology, shall have the benefit of this very obvious principle. Instead of which, like an unprotected common, it lies open to incursions from every quarter of human speculation, and this without one condescending regard on its own distinct evidences—its own independent literature—its own massive and most crude authorship—its own argumentations and appeals both to the felt exigencies of the human conscience, and to that historical testimony of past ages which, in every other question regarding the facts and narratives of antiquity, would be held as wholly irresistible. All this goes for nothing with the infidels and demi-infidels who pour in upon us from all the sciences, and who have turned our theology into a sort of play-ground, on which, broken loose from law and logic, they shall hold their saturnalia. And the injustice we complain of is, that should any of these have earned a brilliant reputation in their own department, as La Place and M. Comte in France, or the psychologists of Germany, their adverse testimony, or even contemptuous insinuation, will countervail the authority of men who have earned, and rightfully earned, as brilliant a reputation in ours, and that too on the field of an investigation which has formed the business of their lives—the Clarkes, the Butlers, the Lardners, and the Paleys of our own land. For the disparagement of theology, every principle of equity has been inverted; and while philosophy has done us no harm by the strength of its arguments, it has, in the person of some of its most renowned masters, the enemies of our faith, wielded a most dangerous fascination, by which to poison and unsettle the minds of thousands and tens of thousands in general society.

But the name of Bishop Butler reminds me of another danger against which it is my duty to warn you. I have just

apprized you of the danger which lies in the infidelity of men about whom there has been cast the glare of a scientific reputation, and this arising from the devotion of our own ignorance, which ignorance has in certain senses been well termed the mother of devotion ; or, in other words, from our implicit and idolatrous deference to the authority of great names, this greatness having been achieved on other fields than those of theology. But I would have you to understand, and be on your guard against a like danger, even when the greatness has been achieved on the field of theology itself. Butler I have sometimes called in your hearing the Bacon of Theology ; and certain it is, that as the one, in the construction of his *Novum Organum*, which points out the right way of philosophizing, had his eye over many sciences ; so the other, in the construction of his *Analogy*, and by which he has reared an impregnable bulwark against the assaults of infidelity both on natural and revealed religion, had to expatiate over a still wider field of survey and superintendence ; the arena of the one's speculation being the world, and of the other both the world and the word—these two volumes from the hand of God, the volume of Nature and the volume of Revelation. It is true that, for the execution of Butler's task, there sufficed a more slender acquaintance than Bacon had with the particular sciences, though his was slender enough, as we have already seen. Yet, deficient and meagre in detail as the special acquisitions of both were, each of these great masters could, from the materials in his hand, frame his own immortal lesson, and bequeath it to posterity for the guidance of all future generations—the one resolving the investigation of all experimental truth, with the view of ascertaining the laws of nature, into the question of, What findest thou ? the other resolving the investigation of all scriptural truth, with the view of ascertaining the ways of God, into the parallel question of, What readest thou ? Both, in fact, agreed in this, that they awarded a Supreme authority to findings over all the fancies of incompetent speculation—their only difference being, that the findings of the one are gathered from the arena of the world, and

of the other from the arena of the word. If the former tells us, in the person of his most illustrious disciple, Sir Isaac Newton, that *Homo non est magister sed interpres naturæ*, the other, if not by words, yet in effect, tells us in his own person, that *Homo non est magister sed interpres scripturæ*. Yet, as we have observed already, to institute the analogy of Butler between nature and the Bible, required, on the one hand, no very profound acquaintance with either the special laws or the special phenomena of nature; and accordingly, in this department, beside a very general reference to our modern astronomy, we recognise little more than a sagacious and intelligent observation, whether of the ordinary processes that are going on around us, and which might be read of all men, or of certain broad and palpable phases in the state of man and of human society. But the important thing, and on which I found my present lesson to you, is, that the construction of that analogy, with its masterly argument, just required, in the other department, as little of a profound acquaintance with either the special doctrines or special sayings of the Bible: and so it follows, that the high service which Butler rendered to our cause, and by which he earned for himself so glorious a reputation, should not so dazzle and overpower, or so lord it over your understanding, as that he shall become your supreme and universal dictator in the science of theology. The truth is, that just as Bacon smiled contemptuous on the disciples of the Copernican system, calling them the charioteers of the firmament, because they would have our world to move in space, and yet, by following in the track which he himself had pointed out, have they established this to be the universal order of creation; so is it possible that Butler may have so far misapprehended the disciples of the Evangelical system, as in the substitution of his own more attenuated views for theirs, to have overlooked a great and essential principle in the scheme of Christianity. It is not unlikely, nay, it is often exemplified, that he who has reared a noble monument of defence around the credentials of Scripture, should have imperfectly studied the contents of it; and let me therefore warn you, lest the

admiration of Butler should seduce you into a like admiration of that classic and lettered, but withal cold and unspiritual theology in which Butler shared, and which characterized the leading men of the Church of England at the commencement of the last century.

It is conceivable—the very conception which we tried to illustrate at the commencement of our address—that one might be acquainted with the generic properties of all the sciences, the common resemblances that obtain betwixt them, and yet not be acquainted in any great degree with the specific properties which belong to each of them, so as that he might speak with a voice of rightful authority on the more extensive field of knowledge, and yet on the more special fields of knowledge, or the narrower sections of the whole territory, should have no authority at all. It is with things generical, the resemblances or even the distinctions and differences among the several sciences that Bacon deals in his *Novum Organum*; and it is with things still more generical, the resemblances as also the distinctions between the word and the world that Butler deals in his *Analogy*. Each in his respective walk has educed a great and enduring lesson, and one of pervading influence throughout all philosophy on the one hand, and throughout all theology on the other; yet neither, however conversant in the lessons of what might be termed the *prima philosophia*, is therefore entitled to assume the pre-eminence of a dictator or master over any of the particular sciences; and far less is the labourer, however brilliant his discoveries or acquisitions in some one of the sciences, entitled on that account to domineer or dogmatize within the limits of another science distinct from his own. But this observation might be carried farther. For as the whole of the intellectual domain, the whole body of universal truth, is resolved into separate sciences, so is each science resolvable into so many branches or subsections of its own; and it is a truly possible thing, that he who has entered upon one of these departments and made it all his own, might be as unsafe a guide in every other of the departments as the veriest school-boy, alike unpractised in all, and ignorant of all.

If a former consideration should be of avail in protecting you from the infidelity of such as La Place, the present consideration should be of as good avail in protecting you from the heresies of such as Lardner—great among the credentials, but truly little, I should say sadly unintelligent and wrong among the contents of Scripture. What I want is, that you should call no man master; and that in these days, when successive systems are rolling in upon us from the Continent of Europe, and a tide of speculation is setting in which threatens to displace all our ancient faiths, whether in theology or science, from the foundation they are now standing on, you shall not be overborne by the authority of foreign names, or unsettled from your old convictions by the outlandish phraseology of dark and oracular sentences; but that in the exercise of a resolute and independent judgment, you will continue as heretofore to study each science on its own distinct evidences, and deal with each question on its own distinct merits, lest mistaking the *ignotum* for the *magnificum*, you should suffer a high-sounding transcendentalism to seduce you either from the ways or from the words of truth and soberness.

There is a certain *prima philosophia* of this sort now springing up in Germany, or rather a certain heaving aspiration towards it—of spectral and portentous form, and to the imaginations of many possessed of a certain wizard power, by which to subordinate, nay, to supersede every existing school, and set aside all the foregoing systems of other days; in a word, to new model the whole scheme and platform of philosophy, and to regenerate all the sciences. If I may say it without profaneness—"All old things are to be done away, and all things to become new."

But let me apprise you, that neither the code nor the constitution of this great intellectual monarchy has yet been conclusively settled. There is still a world of diversity and strenuous conflict among numerous competitors for the throne; and this after the rapid and ever-shifting succession of such competitors for more than half a century. Meanwhile, the collective mind of Britain, and I speak of its higher mind or reason,

that which seeks and soars among the loftiest summits of the temple, and now occupies the uppermost regions of our literary commonwealth, instead of putting forth its own independent energies, or daring of itself to scale these mysterious altitudes, looks wistfully to the quarter where it is that the controversy is going on, and waits for tidings from afar. In this attitude of expectancy, some, and these I fear not a few, would suspend all our old methods of inquiry, till they have learned whether the sentence to be given forth may or may not pronounce upon them as altogether worthless—they are paralyzed by the mighty pretensions of an occult philosophy which they have not yet studied, couched in a cabalistic nomenclature which they feel themselves as yet unable to comprehend; and so distrusting all the scholarship of the land we live in, would they ground their arms for a season, and keep our own literature and our own philosophy at abeyance. As in the interregnum of a remote and subordinate province like Canada, or an island in the West Indies, they are at a loss how to proceed till the arrival of their new governor; and so without a mind and without a mastery of their own, they will not venture or attempt to fashion their own views of truth and of the universe, but look and long for the next importation from Germany.

In these circumstances I hail the appearance of a book fitted of all others to enlighten and enlarge the mind of this country, and that, too, on a subject of which we stood pre-eminently in need of information—Morell's *Historical and Critical View of the Speculative Philosophy of Europe in the Nineteenth Century*—a work of surpassing interest and power, in which with giant stride he expatiates over the whole territory of mental science, alike accomplished for the historical survey of its discoveries and doctrines, and for his own independent estimate of their truth. According to the state of their previous conceptions, it will elevate in one class of thinkers their respect for the German metaphysics, and it will repress in another class their idolatrous veneration for them. I believe the effect on the whole will be, that by taking off the veil from the *ignotum* of this subject, he will reduce the ideas which many pre-

viously had of its *magnificum*. For myself, I confess my relief from a certain undefined apprehension of something adverse in those speculations, and which for a time might prove formidable to the cause of theology. Adverse they undoubtedly are, yet to us not formidable, notwithstanding that in respect of their bearings on our own peculiar subject, they seem to have the whole authority of this truly able and accomplished author upon their side: for him, too, whenever he touches on our professional theme, I hold to be seriously in the wrong; and that upon his views, tinged as they are by those of the authors whom he describes, and who have too much infected him, the whole of theology would be placed on a most precarious basis. This I deem of sufficient importance for the lectureship of at least a week;* and if I have time and strength for it, to be delivered immediately before or immediately after the Christmas holidays, when, notwithstanding the charge which he has preferred against the natural theology of Scotland as having dwindled into puerility, I shall attempt to demonstrate as God might enable me that ours is the more excellent way.

But though to this extent I am willing to be diverted from my regular course of lecturing, I do not want that all of you, or even that most of you, shall be diverted to any extent from the regular course of your studies. I trust I may have made myself sufficiently understood on the respective functions of principal and professor, to convince you, that while he who sustains both these offices should, in the latter capacity, keep steadfast on the pathway of his own peculiar lessons, and suffer nothing to interrupt the ordinary succession of these, but when the urgent necessities of self-defence call on him to repel some menacing hostility that has arisen from without; in his former capacity, again, it is his especial vocation and duty to have a watchful eye upon all such inroads, and to see that no unwarrantable invasion shall be made by any one science upon the proper and rightful domain of another. I am thus under the weight of a twofold obligation to undertake the task which

* These Lectures will be found embodied in Art. I. No. XII. North British Review.

I have just announced to you ; and as to the part which yourselves have to take in it, some of you will recollect what I have often urged in your hearing, that while indispensable for all that they should be qualified to expound in the hearing of our people the doctrines of the faith, it is desirable—nay, the Church-militant on earth is deficient in some of her essential equipments if she be without them—most desirable that some on the high arena of literary championship and debate should be pre-eminently qualified to fight the battles of the faith. As one principal might suffice among the general professors of a college, so a few controversialists stationed in its watch-towers and bulwarks, might suffice among the many pastors of a Church, busied in the cultivation of the inner vineyard. And, as the instance of what I mean, I have more than once spoken thus of Scripture criticism, strongly recommending to all their attendance upon its lessons as given here, and with the expressed hope, at the same time, that so many—a select number, a gifted few—amid that variety of tastes and endowments which the hand of Nature impresses upon her children, with their special and constitutional adaptation for this walk of study, would afterwards arise to be the future Griesbachs, and Hugs, and Michaelises of Scotland, and so able to cope with the Neologists, and with the infidel and demi-infidel Biblists of Germany. But another instance might be given in the study of the mental philosophy, regarding which I am glad to say that there are not a few (and thanks for it to the more recent arrangements of our Free Church College) on the likely way to its best and loftiest attainments ; so that in now recommending an immediate perusal of Morell's book, I do it with the confidence that a goodly number of those here present will forthwith enter upon the task. It is not that I expect, and not that I desire, that one and all of our theological school should be fired with the ambition of reaching either to a transcendental Scripture criticism, or a transcendental metaphysics ; but the same education which raises to a high average proficiency in both these departments, will carry upward, above and beyond the average, the spirits which are kindred to each of

them ; and as with the one, so with the other, I do hope, I do most ardently desire—I should esteem it one of the highest services which our Institute could render to society, and among the proudest of its literary honours, did there issue from these walls in those days of conflict which are coming, when many of ourselves shall be reposing in the dust, profoundly asleep to all the noises of the living world above us, some master minds that could measure strength with every system of philosophy on the continent, and by the weight of a more powerful and ponderous demonstration than was wielded by any, could rebuke and overbear all the infidelity that was to be found in them.

Meanwhile, though as plain and puerile they may characterize your pursuits, let me bid you persevere in them. They would fain make you believe, that hitherto you have been dealing with nothing but superficialities, and have never yet found so much as a door of entry into the recesses and profundities of their inner world. Continue as you have begun, and do as ye have hitherto been doing ; and be assured, that with the voice of that conscience which speaks so powerfully in your bosoms, and those glories of a universe patent to every eye, and which shines so palpably around you ; and be farther assured, that in the Bible, that wondrous monument of past ages, with its firm authentic place in history, and its telling power upon your hearts, though unskilled to the end of your days in the idealism of Germany, and in all its categories, be assured, nevertheless, in the possession of vouchers so ample as these, that both your natural and your Christian theology is safe.

But, while I propose to deliver, in the course of our coming session, the brief lectureship of perhaps about a week on Morell's History of Philosophy, and in the hope that so many of you as are inclined to it will meanwhile give your best attention to the work, it is not for any extra professional object that I have thus resolved, but mainly for the protection of our own science ; insomuch, that for those who are not inclined to it, and who, it may be, constitute the majority of our theological students, I would not expect, and most certainly do not recommend, that they should in the least interrupt or suspend

their ordinary readings. Their very ignorance of the German idealism, and indifference to the subject, the very confinement of their mental philosophy to the doctrines and metaphysics of the Scottish school, are guarantees in themselves against the deleterious influence of these outlandish speculations. It is for those who are smitten with a taste for the systems of the Continent, and I have no wish to discourage it, nay, should rejoice if some two or three were to sound them to their very depths, for then I am sure they could all the better expose the illegitimacy of their adverse applications to the Christian faith ; it is to ward off a deleterious influence from their minds, that I feel it incumbent on me to enter on a computation of the distances and bearings between this transcendentalism, on the one hand, and the theology of the Bible upon the other. This I apprehend to be all the more necessary, that I do recollect of some who, chiefly in the University, and before our Disruption, were a good deal carried, as if by a sort of fashionable infection, which might have been seen in the phraseology of their discourses, and I will add, however mortifying to one's own self-love, and all the more mortifying that they were really superior and aspiring young men, who gave forth the symptom which I am now to describe in their obvious inattention to the lessons of the Chair, as if they had only been plain Scottish boluses, having vastly too much in them of the home-bred and the commonplace to be at all suited for those higher appetencies which nothing else can satisfy but the more exquisite and *recherché* articles of a foreign preparation, just as if we had been serving up milk for babes, instead of strong meat for men of a full-grown understanding, or speaking from the outer court to those who had already been initiated in the mysteries of the inner temple. What I want to make out is, that the unintelligible does not always imply the solid, or even the profound ; and, far more momentous than this, that the simple verities of the Christian faith rest on a foundation deep enough and strong enough to uphold them against the more recent, or, I should rather say, the ever-shifting philosophy that now sets in upon us from abroad.

Many of you know my value for the intelligible, and my conviction of the magnitude of that service which lies in transmuting what is profound, and only understood by a few, into what is plain, and so that it may be understood by many. We know well the penalty that awaits the successful execution of such an aim, that, had he abstained, he would have been still ranked among the profound thinkers of the day ; but, because he has not only made the endeavour, but fulfilled it, he sinks down to the level of a very plain and ordinary personage. Nevertheless, I will rejoice in it as the best achievement of philosophy, when it has made its products patent to every eye, and accessible to the world at large.

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